EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



THEOLOGY 111 – Post-Grad – Angelic Conflict

Post-Grad Reading in ANGELOLOGY

THEOLOGY 111.

by

DR JOHN CAMERON McEWAN

[BOOK 14 PG - 1]

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(55th Anniversary of my Salvation)

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States jurists saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Salvation is available for all members of the human race.
Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

How do I become a Christian?
There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

The results of Salvation
The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:
My sins are taken away (John 1:29),
I possess eternal life now (1 John 5:11,12),
I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),
The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (1 Corinthians 6:19),
And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

Many other Christian resources are available freely from our internet web site: www.ebcwa.org.au and www.http://ebcwa.free.org.nz for weekly messages.

ANGELOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

This is a forgotten subject in Systematic Theology in today's world, and yet it is spoken openly of in every "New Age" Cult meeting, and in every popular weekly magazine. The Bible makes very clear that there are beings around us at all times, superior to us in themselves, and intimately involved with and interested in our destiny, and that they have a destiny themselves within and after this present universe is imploded.

This is all spoken of in very matter of fact ways in the Bible, without any drama or exaggeration that indicates we have entered the realm of "myth and legend". They are not fantasy beings, nor "primitive explanations" for things ancient peoples didn't understand. They are described from the earliest revelation in the scripture (Book of Job – around 2500 BC or before) through to the work of the Apostle John (Revelation, Gospel of John, and the last work, First John – final form of all three around 96 AD).

Theologians record at least 108 references to angels in the Old Testament and at least 165 references to angels in the New Testament. The Hebrews word for angel is "M'lak", and the Greek word translated "angel" is "aggelos", both of which may be translated as "Messenger" with the concept of assigned and directed servant, doing the will of the one who "sends" them.

The Bible reveals to us that there are two categories of these beings called the "sons of God"; both fallen and elect/holy. They are created beings, **Psalm 148:2-4, Colossians 1:16**, not in any way equal to God, but always under God's authority and direction or permission for all actions relating to people. From the first revelation in the Bible's oldest book, Job, it is clear that they are under God's direction, and that even Satan and his fallen angel followers cannot act without "permission" against any human servant of the Lord God.

Biblical revelation also makes it clear by descriptions of their behavior that their destiny and mankind's are related, and they have great interest in the exercise of our free will, and in our worship and service for the Lord. The malice of Satan, the leader of the fallen angels towards us as believers/Children of God, is highlighted by Scripture, and we are warned about this malice, but also encouraged to stand firm against the fallen angels, and we are assured that "greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world". **1 John 4:4**.

As believers we are told to "Stand", "Resist", and be prepared to fight/defend ourselves against them, by utilizing all the "Armour of the Holy Spirit". **Ephesians 6:10-18, James 4:4-10, 1 Peter 5:6-11**. These direct and straight forward "Daily Orders" for every believer are so blunt and lacking fake melodrama or fantasy that it is plain to see that every believer MUST understand these creatures and take regular and daily actions to keep safe or they are in grave and potentially fatal anger.

The straight forward revelation of facts about angels and our required actions while walking through the midst of this world make it clear that all believers must know these things and be guided by revelation, not the fantasies and stories of men. In this subject we must avoid all the "stories" of the many cultures that speak of these superior beings, and be guided by the historic revelation of Scripture only.

Most books on the angels begin with the accounts of stories of angelic beings from all the many cultures of the world, and tell stories from Greek philosophy and history, but this is to stray into danger, for we are speaking of superior and malicious beings, way superior to ourselves and deception is the fallen angel's main device. Put aside all Medieval pictures of demons and angels, and lay them up in the library, where they belong, for the stories of angels that occur outside the revelation of God in the Scriptures are nonsense.

Satanic deception begins with the way he has revealed himself and his team members in all the cultures of mankind through space-time. Do not be fooled by stories, even first hand accounts of sensible people who have "seen angels", for the deception of the one who is able to reveal himself as the "angel of light" is powerful indeed. **2 Corinthians 11:10-15**. Satan's devices (which we will examine below) are extensive, but centre round his double strategy; pretend he is not real at all and there is nothing to worry about, or that he is benign and actually quite positive to mankind. He is from another dimension and so we must be careful, for we lack the cognitive ability to judge in the angelic area, except by the "fruit" of their actions.

Logic should guide us to this defensive and careful position, but satanic policy has been deception, distortion and distraction from the beginning, and so let us pause and reflect upon this subject with our God given logical thinking processes active! Angels are revealed as an earlier creation to mankind. Adam is met by Satan in the Garden; Satan is already active on the earth and takes charge in the Garden, and so deceives our ancestor with his superior power, knowledge and malicious cunning.

Mankind is restricted, this side of eternity, to being in one place at one time, and having to travel to other places through time. As a result of the Fall at Eden we all die and leave this space-time universe, and only then enter eternity; either to be judged or to enter heaven. Until then we have very limited space-time minds. The angels do not die, and have been here since before Mankind was made! They have vastly superior knowledge to us, and can appear and disappear, traveling through time in ways unknown to us presently. We cannot "out-think" an angel using our own very limited minds, nor do we have superior power in ourselves as women and men. We are "sitting ducks" for deception by such creatures if they have malice, for they can fool us easily, operating as they do from well beyond our own limitations.

Our security is not in tricks, techniques, spells or rituals. Our security is only guaranteed when we walk personally with Jesus, drawing on His power and knowledge, and when we heed his instructions through the indwelling Holy Spirit, as the Word of God is understood and followed/applied into the very fabric of each situation we face. The Bible also makes clear in **Hebrews 1:14**, that we each have, as believers, an assigned "Guardian Angel", there simply to "keep our back safe". If such is provided, it is necessary; so there is real danger here! Lets not be flippant with this subject for it is deadly serious to get it wrong!

The Bible makes it very clear that the angels are not neutral beings! They are either "for us or against us", but the power of God within us is way superior to anything that Satan and his team can muster. **1 John 4:4**. We are called to be obedient to the Lord, His Word, His Holy Spirit and we are then safe and secure. Satan delights in deception, and those easily fooled are the proud, arrogant and self important! Jesus words come to mind, "By their fruits you know them…" **Matthew 7:13-23**. Humility, Obedience and Safety go together! Arrogance and failure are also companions! Do not doubt the importance of this subject – you do so at your peril!

This subject is not an optional extra to Theology; for if you believe the Bible teaches the truth, then you are involved in the "Angelic Conflict", and you are at the centre of this "Invisible War" at every moment of your life here on this temporary earth. You are either a fully equipped, trained and obedient soldier of the Lord, or you will certainly be a casualty! We are on "Active Service" (**2 Timothy 2:3-16** below) from the moment of salvation to the moment of our recall to join the Lord in heaven.

This subject, like no other, separates believers into two camps; the prepared and active service soldiers, and what I refer to as the "rest home boys and girls". Are we part of the "Army of the Lord" or are we sitting in our deck chairs waiting for the end, part of God's sleeping church? Is God's Word His Word? Is the Bible your "Daily Orders" for active service, or is it just the words of men about God, and only helpful as a theoretical guide to life? A low view of scripture = a high possibility of being a casualty in the angelic conflict!

Read God's revealed very direct instructions through the Holy Apostles below. Select your company believer – you are either with the Apostles in an apostolic faith, **Jude 3**, that identifies these things as real, or you are with the theological liberals/unbelievers who deny these things! There is no middle ground, nor any safe and spiritually powerful/effective service without understanding the Angelic Conflict and your place within it.

Ephesians 6:10-18, "*10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*
11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
13. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
14. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

James 4:4-10, *"4. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*
5. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?
6. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.
7. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.
9. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.
10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

1 Peter 5:6-11, ***"****6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*
7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.
11. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

2 Timothy 2:3-16. *"3. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*
4. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.
5. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.
6. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.
7. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.
8. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:
9. Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.
10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
11. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:
12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:
13. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.
14. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.
15. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
16. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

Jude 3, "*3. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*

James 2:19-20, *"19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*
20. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

NOTE – These are real instructions, for real people, in a real war, with God seeking real worship and work from us! Are you with the Apostles? Are you active and focused on the spiritual battle raging around you, or are you with the unbelieving fools, useless, with a wasted life, just waiting until you are deceived to your death? We are left here upon this temporary earth to worship, work, and witness, yet so many in the churches are time and space wasters! Let us be alert to the reality of the Angelic Conflict! Let us follow God's Word in these matters and not be like the majority, sleep walking to our early death!

WE ARE NOT ALONE HERE, NOR IS THE UNIVERSE ITSELF EMPTY OF OTHER LIFE

Unlike the "Seti Project" scientists we do not need to search for extra-terrestrial life, for the Bible tells us that it exists, and has done since the Creation; that the angels inhabit the universe. There is nothing that indicates that they are all presently restricted to the earth. **John 14:2, Colossians 1:16, 1 Peter 3:22**.

Some are restrained presently because of their great sin that led to Noah's Flood, but it appears the angels are able to travel at will presently. **2 Peter 2:4**, **Jude 6**.

NOTE – Post-Graduate Students, please refer to the highlighted **texts** in this book, and open up the EBCWA Commentaries and study each passage to gain further information and clarify your questions.

In this study we are leaving behind the speculations of limited men, and seeking God's revelation of these things, and it is often going to be very different to what we were taught by our tutors, who didn't apply themselves to this subject, because they under-estimated its importance, or were embarrassed about it.

We must guard against speculation here, for we cannot know the activities of the angels in the universe beyond what the Bible reveals about their activities in relation to our Christian Walk. In military terms, we "need to know" about that aspect of the angels activity, and while it would be "nice to know" what they get up to beyond our earth, we are not told and speculation is pointless and time wasting distraction. Our minds are space-time limited at this point and so let us be guided by the Word of God alone, and accept our limitations, by a realistic view of ourselves and our ability to grasp things! Lets be humble and careful here! This is an area where fantasy and speculation are always time-wasting, but may be potentially fatal to our spiritual life!

Our purely natural vision is unable to see angels, unless they have permission to reveal themselves in our dimension, and then they are awesome to our eyes, and they are often way more numerous than we may have previously imagined. **2 Kings 6:7**. Paul warns against the worship of angels, for their awesomeness can lead to this error. **Colossians 2:18**. John is directly told by the revealing angel in Revelation not to worship him! **Revelation 22:8-9**. God's genuine servants never receive worship that belongs only to God.

This fact, of different dimensions and abilities to "see" a reality, should not be strange to us, for animals are able to smell, hear and see things quite differently to us, and invisible to us but 100% real to them. So, for our own protection, God must open the veil between the earthly and spiritual worlds to enable us to "see" these things, but only if it is absolutely required.

It would appear that Satan is also given permission to practice "great deception" by "opening the veil between worlds" and producing appearances at times also. As will be discussed further below, angels take the form of human beings at times, but may take any form, for they are not physical beings, but spiritual – forget our limited spatial-temporal physics when we discuss their appearances and actions, for we enter a different Physics in this area. Theoretical/Philosophical Physicists do speculate here, but even the PhDs in the field can be accused at times of talking nonsense – for they often make the classic "Category Mistake"!

The philosophical "Category Mistake" opens a careless scientist or biblical expositor to ridicule when they speak of one category as if it is another. The entire "Free will – Election - Predestination" debate is a happy hunting ground for philosophical category mistakes. They occur whenever an action of God in Eternity is spoken of as if it is an action within the limits of space and time, with sequence to it in time, when you are speaking of "beyond time-space". This is just the result of a limited man or woman speaking of eternity as if it is linear – but it is not!!!! They speak of one dimension as if it is the same, or within another – and yet they are totally different!

If you do not even understand this paragraph above believer, then you need to revisit Basic Theology. Unless you see your limits here you will end up describing angels like Dante or Rubens! Great art but rubbish theology! We are not to look foolish, and in this study too many pastors look like the fools they sadly are – simply because they follow the speculations of men, rather than see God's revelation clearly.

If you still want to call yourself a Calvinist or an Arminian you betray your limited but sadly arrogant mind! Both viewpoints speak of eternal decisions of the Lord's eternal plan as if they were made in a linear sequence, and in eternity there are not any space-time linear sequences….that is limited to within this temporary created universe – eternity is way beyond these limitations. This universe and all its limits will be "swallowed up", **2 Corinthians 5:4**, "wrapped up and put away" at the end, **2 Peter 3:10-18**, and eternity will be "all in all" and we are destined for there! Until then - Humility brethren, humility in all we say, for we face a different sphere of existence here when we speak about angels and eternity, and we quickly run out of words to describe the things revealed!

The early "Gnostics" on the "lunatic fringes" of the Early Church speculated on the nature and activities of angels, going well beyond the Scriptures, as did the Manicheans and Montanists. Many heretical and cultic "super-spiritual" groups have strayed after these early heresies in every century of the Church's history since the earliest days. This is an area that appeals to the arrogance and the speculative nature of fallen women and men. All manner of people are wearing angel broaches today and thinking they know them…..

Do not be surprised by this! Remember your Systematic Theology study of Satan – he is the great deceiver and he works upon those who seek knowledge and power beyond their real capacity/ability to understand and discern. The first "fruit" of satanic activity is arrogance, pride and over-estimation of the individual's ability and brains!

The fallen angels (demons) are responsible to the Lord finally and will have to give account to their Maker and be judged, just as fallen mankind are, for rejection of God's legitimate authority over them. **Ezekiel 28:16-17, Matthew 25:41**. All angels are responsible and accountable for their actions to Almighty God, and even the elect angels, like Michael, assert their total dependence upon God. **Jude 9, 2 Peter 2:10, Daniel 10:10-21**. Satan acts as if he is master of his own destiny, but he is not – he will be judged and he is condemned already!

Mankind was made, "a little lower than the angels" (**Psalm 8:4-5, Hebrews 2:6-7**), reminding us that we are created in relation to the angels, after their fall, and we are proving something to them by our exercise of our own free will. Satan and his team hate us, and there is good reason. **John 15:18ff**. If we as "lesser beings" can accept grace and mercy, and bow humbly before the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and King, then they, as superior beings should have done so also! We prove, by the exercise of our free will to worship and serve God, that they are culpable for their refusal to do the same thing, and so they truly deserve ultimate judgment!

"Every feature of personality is predicated of the angels. They are individual beings, and though spirits, experience emotions, and they render intelligent worship. Psalm 148:2. They behold with due understanding the face of the Father, Matthew 18:10. They know their limitations (Matthew 24:36), their inferiority to the Son of God, Hebrews 1:4-14. In the case of the fallen angels, they know their ability to do evil…(and they select that option every time).." L S Chafer, Systematic Theology Volume 2, page 10-11.

CREATION, POWER, AND NUMBER OF THE ANGELS

From **Colossians 1:16-17** it is assumed that all the angels were made together as part of the earlier creation to the present one. "*16. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*
17. And he (the Lord Jesus) is before all things, and by him all things consist."

None will be apparently added to their number; we do not become angels….that is another weird myth that grew out of paganism (origin probably Satan himself – as it encourages arrogance). They do not die, they neither marry nor have any children (there are no cherubs – they are pagan art – not biblical truth). We stick to the Bible remember, and we are corrected by the Lord regarding the pagan nonsense we may have previously believed….

Matthew 22:28-30. "*28. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.*
29. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.
30. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.
31. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,
32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

The Lord has defeated death through the Cross and Resurrection, and one day death will be abolished totally! **1 Corinthians 15:25-26**. The angels are the agents of the Lord to gather the people who have rejected Him for final judgment. **Matthew 13:41-43**. Even with the lost there is no final death and extinction; there is eternal judgment, for God made and angels and ourselves to live forever. The enormity of sin and evil is that the creature has insulted the Creator and abused the gift of life and the giver of it. Both fallen angels and fallen mankind will be together forever in the Lake of Fire, to forever regret their life choices, but without distress to the saved, nor chance for change by the lost. Revelation 20:11-15.

Angels gather the fallen human beings, but from one passage it would appear that we gather the fallen angels for judgment! **1 Corinthians 6:1-4**. *"1. Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?*
2. Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
3. Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
4. If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

5. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

Lets not rush off and add to this, but let us reflect upon Paul's words, for they indicate a far greater destiny for us than most reflect upon! We will be used by the Lord to judge the demons! We don't "need to know" how at this point, but reflect on this; they hate us with good reason, for finally we "get even" with them for all the mischief they have caused us.

Angels are created with the ability to travel the universe without taking time to do so, in the same way we see the Lord's resurrection body appear and disappear, and re-appearing in another location. Angels can move incredibly fast, although such words like "fast" are space-time words/concepts and the angels are not subject to this physical universe's limitations that we face. **Daniel 9:21**. They live in the "heavens", **Mark 13:32, Ephesians 3:15**. Once again do not restrict this to the atmospheric heavens. Humbly accept that these creatures are beyond any neat box you may want to squeeze them into!

How many are there? Biblical passages use the phrase "thousand thousands", indicating their numbers are likely in the millions and the term "host" is used which indicates "beyond numbering". Psalm 68:17, 2 Kings 6:17, Daniel 7:10, Matthew 26:53, Hebrews 12:22. It is safe to assert that we are always outnumbered by angels, but there is no concern in this, for we have the equipment provided to defend our self and keep safe in God's power, as we have seen above. We always stand in the supportive and protective presence of the elect angels and should acknowledge this, or at least be aware of their presence and support for us. **Ephesians 6:10-18, 1 John 4:4, 1 Timothy 5:21**.

ANGELS - THEIR ORDER AND ORGANIZATION

Categories of the elect angels that we have revealed to us are, Cherubim, Seraphim and "Living Creatures" (beyond the words of the prophet to fully or even partially describe. The names appear to denote a distinction in their purpose rather than any specific hierarchy or difference in dignity and position. Cherubim appear to be defenders of the holiness of God. **Ezekiel 1:15**. Ezekiel refers to these angelic beings nineteen times. Do a Concordance search and see each passage and its significance. Ezekiel's message centres in the rejection of the Israelites of the Holiness of God, and their mixing of paganism with truth!

The Seraphim (burning ones) are described as having a ministry of purification, unceasing worship and humility**. Isaiah 6:1-3, Revelation 4:8.** "Living creatures" are the words used to describe specific angels revealed to some prophets, and they are the "best words" they can find to describe what otherwise is beyond space-time words. Lets remember the majesty of the angels and their spiritual natures, well beyond the physical bodies we have. They can take physical form, and appear as male or female, or animals, but they are not physical at all!

Specific named angels are few. Lucifer/Satan is the arch-angel of evil after his fall, and he leads the demonic forces who joined him in rebellion against God. His title/name means "son of the morning" and indicates from what a great and high point he fell. He was the "angel of the presence" apparently the closest to God's majesty and yet he rebelled. He has, some count, forty or more titles used of him in scripture. "Satanology" will be studied below, and the Bible Topic Book study is at the end of this book.

Michael is the name of the leader of the elect angels. His name means, "Who is like God?" He fulfills the role Lucifer once had and he has a specific role to protect God's people Israel down the centuries. He has specific roles relating to Israel and Daniel meets him in this capacity. **Daniel 12:1, Revelation 12:7-12**.

Gabriel (meaning – the mighty one) is the messenger of God relating end time visions to Daniel. **Daniel 8:15-27, 9:20-27**. This angel also appears to Mary as recorded in **Luke 1:26-33**. When this angel appears there is something to be revealed that is vital for mankind to understand. This is an important point to "sit with", for when angels appear it is unusual, and always a significant piece of information is to be revealed. They are not entertainers, but messengers of God. Note the interactions below and see what they teach you about the angel's work and the way they work.

Daniel 8:15-27, *"15. And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.*
16. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.
17. So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

18. Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.
19. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.
20. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.
21. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.
22. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.
23. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.
24. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.
25. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.
26. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.
27. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it."

Daniel 9:20-27, *"20. And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;*
21. Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.
22. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.
23. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.
24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
25. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
26. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
27. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Daniel 12:1, *"1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*
2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
3. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.
4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Revelation 12:7-12 *"7. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,*
8. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
10. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.
13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child."

THE MINISTRY OF THE ANGELS

Of the 270+ references to angels in the Scriptures, the vast majority of these describe their activities, and they are activities of service and worship to the holiness of the Lord God. They are actively interested in all that occurs in the eternal plan of God, for they know that it involves them. The elect angels are interested in all our actions, as are the demons, for their destiny is bound up with ours, for we are all creatures of the Sole Creator. They specifically watched the Lord's ministry, and they watch ours, and they worship the Lord.
1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 12:1-3.

1 Timothy 3:16 *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory".*

Hebrews 12:1-3 *". Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*
2. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Psalm 148:1-6 *"1. Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*
2. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.
3. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.
4. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.
5. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.
6. He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass."

Even though we could wander off at this point and talk about them being "mentors" for us to follow, we are not to follow and be mentored by angels! We are to follow the Lord Jesus Christ alone, for He alone is our mentor and our eyes are to be fixed on Him alone. The main "daily standard order" for all believers is – "No distractions – focus upon Jesus alone".

Hebrews 12:1-3 " *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*
2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Cook in his Systematic Theology from over a hundred years ago noted the following. "The faithful service of angels to mankind cannot be explained on the ground of their own love for humanity. They are interested in that which concerns their God. If He would give His Son to die for a lost race of men, they would follow Him as far as possible and at least give instant service, for His sake, wherever it is appointed unto them. It is not imagination, but reality, that the angels are servants of men in a thousand ways. No truth is more established by Scripture that that stated in **Hebrews 1:14**, "Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Noted in Chafer, Vol 2, page 22.

"They visited the patriarch at Mamre, Genesis 18:1-2, and from there went on to deliver Lot. The angels appeared to Jacob and were familiar to Moses. It is written that the Law was ordained by angels, Galatians 3:19, and it was administered by the disposition of angels, Acts 7:53. Their care of God's elect people is asserted in both Testaments. In Psalm 91:11-12 it is written, 'for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone', and in Hebrews 1:14…. It is an angel with the three men in the furnace of fire, Daniel 3:25, and with Daniel in the den of lions, Daniel 6:22." Chafer, Vol 2, page 23.

"In Old Testament terminology, sometimes angels are called the *sons of God* while men are called *servants of God.* In the New Testament this is reversed. Angels are servants, and Christians are *sons of God*." Chafer, Vol 2, page 23. In our saved relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been entered into a new spiritual place that is superior to all the angels, including Satan himself, because of the indwelling Holy Spirit and our intimate relationship with the Father and the Son. Hebrews 4:16. Angels are now either our servants, or our enemies, but they are no longer superior, nor neutral in any way to us and our eternal fate – they rejoice with us, or seek permission to attack us in any way they can.

The elect angels last recorded role is that of servants of worship in the eternal Jerusalem. **Revelation 21:12, Hebrews 12:22-24**. They begin their existence with worship and they end with worship. They rejoice when any member of humanity repents and enters salvation. **Luke 12:8-9, 15:10**.

They are our servants and we are to be focused on the Lord's will for our lives – "looking unto Jesus" – and thereby giving them something to do every day to support us. They are our supporters, but to exercise their role we need to be active, for only active people can be "supported"! They seek employment and we are to live in a Holy Spirit filled manner that gives them something to do and rejoice over! **Hebrews 12:2, 2 Peter 3:12, Jude 21**.

THE THREE CRITICAL EVENTS

Three events are critical turning points in the unfolding of the angelic conflict.

1. The Fall of the Angels with Satan, to become the Demons.
2. The Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden, to become susceptible to the demonic forces.
3 The Defeat of the results of the Fall, by the Cross-Resurrection of the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Evil began with the deliberate rebellion and sinfulness of an angel, who was in a position to know all the facts, and should have recognized his Maker and Lord. Satan's fall is the evidence we need to see to understand the mystery of evil itself – that there is no "reason" behind evil, it is just a determination to reject truth, righteousness and justice, and embrace selfishness, power, exploitation of others, and malice. It is a doomed choice, for none can survive the rejection of their Maker – for HE must be their judge in the end!

Evil will always be baffling to those who think and worship the Lord their God. Free agents may accept and select self destruction – but it will always be sad and baffling when people do so. It is equally baffling that Satan, with his immense intelligence, and exulted position, fell without any necessity to do so, nor any logical chance of his being successful! How can people even think for a second that they can out think their Maker and the Maker of space-time itself, and the Maker of all this present extensive space-time Universe?

I suspect the Lord has made this present, and temporary, universe as large as it apparently is, just to overwhelm mankind and angels with the enormity of His power, majesty, intelligence, mercy, love and creative energy! 1000 years before the incarnation the Psalmist asks the question of fallen mankind! The third event cancels the impact of the second event – the Fall of the first Adam is reversed in its eternal impact by the perfect obedience of the Second Adam, and the Cross-Resurrection wipes away the impact of the first two events for all who embrace their reality by faith. The challenge today is to "kiss the Son", and acknowledge His rulership over our lives. Satan wouldn't do that, and all who join him in the Lake of Fire for eternity are those who will not do that either!

Psalm 2:1ff *"1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?*
2. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,
3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
4. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.
6. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.
7. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.
8. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.
9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
10. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

The definition of evil is bound up with the definitions of "pride" and "arrogance", for the choice of an illogical evil is the choice of someone who is unable to see past their own fat-headed illogicality! Pride is the condemnation of the devil and of all who follow his example. We as believers follow the example of Jesus and the Apostles; the unbeliever follows the example of Satan and his angels. Jesus himself sums up the argument, as recorded by John in his Gospel account.

John 8:12-45 "*12. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
13. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.
*14. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for **I know** whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.*
15. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.
16. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.
*17. **It is also written** in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.*
18. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.
*19. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should **have known** my Father also.*
20. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.
21. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.
22. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.
23. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
24. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.
25. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.
26. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.
27. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.
28. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.
29. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.
30. As he spake these words, many believed on him.
*31. Then said Jesus to those Jews **which believed** on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;*
32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
*33. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never **in bondage** to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?*
34. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.
35. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
36. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.
37. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.
*38. I speak that which **I have seen** with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.*
39. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.
*40. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that **hath told** you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.*
41. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.
42. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.
43. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.
44. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.
45. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."

The study of the "Angelic Conflict" is essentially the study of angelic and human choices, and the culpability and accountability of all those choices. It is the study of the exercise of Free Will – for temporal and eternal blessing, or for eternal judgment. The choice the angels made, and that each of us make make at some and many points, all have consequences, and some have eternal consequences.

The perfect tense of the Greek verbs above highlighted, underline the important truths relating to the choices angels and people make in the Angelic Conflict as it unfolds through space-time and into eternity.

Note above.

Verse 14 Jesus says, "**I know**" where I come from, and this reminds us that it is by revelation only that truth comes about God and the true nature and origin of this temporary universe. Jesus spoke what He knew, but each living creature chooses what and who they believe, and the results of that choice are eternal.

Verse 17 "**It is written**". God's truth is revealed in the Word of God and our attitude towards God's Word sets us up for eternal life or eternal judgment. Will we accept His Word or will we select our own viewpoint?

Verse 19 The Lord was able to say, "**I have known** my Father", and he is the only one able to reveal God to us, for he is God become man, Immanuel, who steps in to do so. Without God's intervention in this universe we are without reliable data. What do we think of the Son? We are back with the truths of Psalm 2.

Verse 31 When people "**believe**" the results are eternal in significance and scope. Our faith in Jesus is at a point in space-time, but the results go on forever. We are either in this relationship and have moved from death to life, or we remain within our limited mind and world and are subject to sin and death.

Verse 33 The sad and fatal pride based arrogance of the unbelievers is seen in their denial of their "**bondage**", and yet from where they say these lies they could have looked up to see the Roman Soldiers standing on the Fortress Antonia walls. Deception is truly the devil's main tool, and these people are bafflingly deceived.

Verse 38 Jesus alone has "**seen**" eternity and stepped into space-time, and reported to us through the incarnation the things we can understand this side of eternity. Will we accept his witness or reject him as Satan did?

Verse 40 Jesus "**has told**" us the truth, and the results of his person and work are eternal. What do we think about Jesus? That is the sole issue for mankind. It is too late for the angels, for they made their full and final choice before man was made. It is not to late for any person upon this earth until their last breath - only then are they locked into their life choices forever.

Truly it is as Dr C S Chafer expressed it, Systematic Theology, Vol 2, Pages 30-31, "Sin, being a contradiction of reason and irrational in itself, is not subject to reason…..The creature, whether angel or human, is created to be God centered. To become self-centered is a contradiction of the basic law of creature existence." Such a choice may only be reversed by the embracing of the person and work of the only Saviour – whose incarnation "resets" history and opens the door to salvation for all mankind, and for rejoicing by all elect angels.

Chafer goes on to quote an earlier theologian in reference to the fallen angel's moral choice to sin against their Maker and Lord, "Sin is not in the constitution of creatures as they came from the creative hand of God, else all would sin. Sin is not an inherent weakness of the creature, else all would have failed. Sin is not a concomitant with free moral agency, else all moral agents must fall…..Ego asserts itself against its own fundamental law, a fact for which no reason is to be assigned other than this, that the possibility of false choosing is the prerogative of finite autonomous being…" Vol 2, page 31.

Augustine of Hippo, writing in his book the "City of God", Book 12, vi, notes, "When the will abandons what is above itself, it turns to what is lower, it becomes evil, not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is wicked…" While I often disagree with Augustine, I do not here, for he puts his finger directly upon the issue – it is the free will choice to reject God's viewpoint and select the creature's.

SATANOLOGY

The Bible has a great deal to say about this great but thoroughly evil being. His motives, methods, character and purpose are fully discussed from the first book written in time (Job) to the last (1 John). Every aspect of personality is predicated of Satan, and many people are drawn to him as the ultimate rebel. Rejection of authority is his hallmark symptom, and for many, maybe even the majority of mankind, this rebel nature makes him very attractive. He "markets" this, and does all he can to hide his deep and abiding malice towards all mankind. He is especially ruthless to his greatest servants; they never end well. If you are in doubt of this, examine the groveling and pathetic deaths of Hitler and his henchmen!

He is the "father of liars", and so his own assertions about himself need to be examined carefully. He can be expected to deceive if we are careless and do not ask the right questions about what we hear said by others. Prayerfulness is critical, not discussion with other limited men and women.

We must firstly identify our source of information – and if it is other limited people we are likely deceived or distracted from the very start. God's revealed Word alone gives us any stability and certainty. His origin and character in Ezekiel, and his great sin in Isaiah, are revealed. Refer to the Commentaries below on each passage, but here and now just read through both passages together and get the feeling of the satanic character.

Ezekiel 28:11-19 *"11. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*
12. Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
13. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.
14. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.
15. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.
16. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.
17. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.
18. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.
19. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."

Isaiah 14:12-17 *"12. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*
13. For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
14. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.
15. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.
16. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;
17. That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?
18. All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.
19. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet."

It is pride, arrogance and sheer malice towards mankind that characterizes Satan, and his hatred of all legitimate human and angelic rulership (except his own) works out in his hatred of churches and their leadership. He despises mankind and hates especially those who love the Lord and seek to live Holy Spirit controlled lives and be Christi like examples to others. He hates us as we walk with the Lord because he is very limited in what he can do to us at this point, for a Spirit filled and armoured believer is well protected. **Ephesians 6:10-18**. Only unconfessed sin, or foolish presumptuous walking into places away from God's path, open us to full satanic malice.

He desires always to destroy the happiness of all of mankind, for each of us remind him that he is superior and yet people just like us have accepted the Saviour and so condemned him eternally to the Lake of Fire. For if we, as inferior beings, could recognize a Saviour then so should he have, and bowed his knee. He will not bow his knee and hates all who do. Jesus tells Simon Peter that Satan as desired to "sift him like wheat", **Luke 22:31**, and in Caiaphas' Court he will get his chance, and achieve Peter's fall into sin and his deep embarrassment at it, but he cannot stop Peter's confession later nor the Lord's forgiveness of Peter. Satan is powerless to stop the grace, mercy, and love of God towards all who seek God's goodness. Satan "gets to keep" Judas, but cannot get Peter, for Peter bows before Grace, Mercy and love, and so finds Peace and forgiveness.

Let us see each of the above passages in their context in the chapters. For in each Satan is described in terms of a human being who has tried to do what he did! Through the two prophets God's point is clear. Satan tried to do what all who follow him try to do; achieve heights of power and dignity that they simply don't have the character, ability, or capacity to gain and hold. Their view of themselves is out of kilter with reality! They are ruled by pride and arrogance; lust has hold of their heart and their logic is flawed as a result.

EZEKIEL 28:1. *The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God*:

The arrogance of man is the path of Satan, and pride always goes before a fall, as it did before "the fall" of both Satan and Adam. When any being starts to believe their own publicity they fall into foolishness, and when men believe they are gods they fall greatly into danger of judgment from the real and only God. Herod Agrippa the First would later make the same error when he dealt with the descendants of the people of Tyre and Sidon. **Acts 12:18-23**. God is not mocked, and if he has not judged such people he will; it is only a matter of time. Satan himself fell into this error, for as the Arch-Angel he believed he could defeat and replace God, mistaking his own considerable power, for the Almighty power of the Creator of all.

3 *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: 4 With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:*

The words of Daniel to Belshazzar later come to mind here. **Daniel 5:18-30**. Daniel is a ruler of the kingdom, and especially over the province of Babylon, and so he would have been well known to the exiles to whom Ezekiel ministers, and his grace and favour as well as his great wisdom were respected, and he was admired by all who knew him. **Daniel 1:19-21, 2:48-49**. He was wise enough however to accept he was "governor" not king, and he never sought kingship, and was loyal to Nebuchadnezzar all his days.

Daniel's wisdom has however been ignored by the arrogant and pride filled stupid Judean kings on their visits to Babylon, and his advice regarding not rebelling has been disdainfully rejected by the rulers of both Judah and Tyre. They have joined in the alliance to oppose Babylonian might, and have likely spoken to one another in terms of Hiram and Solomon, but the two men who sit on the thrones of both places are no mighty men; they are fools and arrogant ones at that. They are out of touch with reality, and so was Satan when he sinned and fell. The fruit of God's presence in the life is a "space-time reality focused" person; Satan's captured fools are always out of touch with temporal and also with the baffling eternal realities.

Nebuchadnezzar would later suffer from that same arrogance, even though he was a genius. Even as a genius, his arrogance was challenged and corrected by God, and he had seven years of severe physical and mental illness to correct him, and he received that divine correction and is saved. **Daniel 3:1, 4:26-37.** The great king did finally bow before the Lord God and acknowledge him as Lord of all, and most importantly Lord of his own life. He had previously said this, but it was politics not faith at that earlier point, that guided his words, as we can see from his reference later to "gods" in **Daniel 4:9, 18**.

Nebuchadnezzar went through three steps to genuine salvation; the first was his recognition of the power of Daniel to interpret dreams, and so he acknowledges the God of Israel as one of the gods. **Daniel 2:47**. Secondly he went back into even more arrogant self centeredness than before. He had "nodded to God" but not recognized his Lordship over him. **Daniel 3:1ff**.

Finally it is his dream of being chopped down that leads to the reminder to him, that he, like all kings and poor people alike, will rise or fall according to the divine plan and power. **Daniel 4:10-18.** Our destiny is not in our own hands, and it is only the mental illness that lowers him to the state of an animal that corrects, converts, and delivers him from his polytheism to the worship of the One True God. **Daniel 4:34-37.**

Daniel was the interpreter of dreams, even those not told to him were revealed to him, with their interpretations! **Daniel 2:1-19.** Refer to the EBCWA commentary by Dr Peter Moses on the book of Daniel as it will open up understanding of events at court through the period we have studied in Ezekiel. Daniel had the greatest of all wisdom, and in the economic area the king of Tyre has had wisdom to make great wealth. He has great abilities to make money, but he has no life wisdom, and he is certainly not as smart as he thinks he is. It is incredible that both the kings of Tyre and Judah rejected the wisdom of Daniel, but their reasons may be political.

Daniel was seen as "Babylonian" and so they may not have trusted him with their counsel, or sought any from him. Their own inflated and incorrect opinion of themselves and their "patriotic" rebellion stopped them seeking godly wisdom. This is Satan's sin also, in that he rebels without thinking about who he is rebelling against – for God is his Creator.

Once again we are confronted with the heart of the modern lie of the so-called "prosperity gospel"! Great wealth does not mean great God given wisdom, nor does it mean great holiness, nor does it indicate God's blessing at all.

This self centered (read Satanically inspired) king of Tyre has received great wealth, but God is not there in it, indeed he has insulted and arrogantly opposed God and his plan. He has, like his true master Satan, set himself up against God thinking he can replace him. **Proverbs 18:10-12, Isaiah 14:12-21**.

Read these three linked proverbs carefully and see their application to the heart of this issue. From the wealthiest man of his age, Solomon, we have the condemnation of those who consider wealth as anything of spiritual significance at all. Wealth is to be used for the Lord, and if we have it we rejoice in it and use it fully for the Lord's work, but we do not deceive ourselves into thinking that it makes us superior to anyone else spiritually. The king of Tyre lifted himself up and so showed thereby the source of his "worldly" wisdom, and so why it was limited, for it was satanic viewpoint – "Worldliness" (Refer Doctrine at the end of the book).

5 *By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: 6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;*

The two kings had increased their wealth with business acumen and worldly wisdom, but there was no spiritual content in it, for their hearts were lifted up in arrogance and pride, rather than being respectfully appreciative before their maker. They would not give their maker credit, but took it all to themselves. This remains the central sin of rejecting mankind today, and will be until the end. It has its origin in Satan's rebellion. It is not that they do not believe in a creator, but that they believe they are able to replace him!

Unsaved mankind prefers the picture of the divine watchmaker, who has wound up the universe and left it to them. They do not want personal accountability, for they prefer personal licence to do anything they wish, and yet such a view is not rational – for if we are created and placed here there will be a reason for it, and finding that to serve the Creator will provide meaning and purpose for us. They have chosen the path of arrogance, but they will still have to confront the true God of all, and face the full consequences of their evil choices, just as Satan will also. There is no escape from truth, only delay in facing it due to foolish denial.

7 *Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. 8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.*

The Chaldeans were, as has been noted above, even more cruel than the Assyrians they replaced. The Assyrians took many prisoners from the fall of Samaria, over 27,000 by Sennacherib's own account, yet from the three sieges of Jerusalem far fewer survive, and from the last one only 745 people live to tell the tale from a population that may have exceeded 100,000. **Jeremiah 52:30.** Their cruelty is the reason for their own judgment fifty years later. Before they fall themselves, they will bring this cruelty to the other nations that have abused Judah in her plight. Justice will be done to all the players in this drama unfolding in Ezekiel's day, but it will be in God's time. Just so with Satan's judgment; it is all ready and will be visited upon him at the right moment in accordance with the Eternal Plan.

The prophet records their drawing of their bright swords, and their murder of the beauty of Tyre as they hack through people, clothing, furniture and cloth. The nation of Tyre is brought down to the pit of Hell, and their people disappear as thoroughly as if they had sunk without trace in the sea. Psalms **88:4-7, Proverbs 28:13-18.**

Like corrupt Judah, their only hope is repentance and restoration by God to their place amongst the nations. This city will rise again, populated by more and more mixed peoples as she develops and rebuilds, but finally her paganism will spell her end. Her pagan choices catch up with her.

9 *Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. 10 Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.*

They have claimed to be gods, and the Lord, through his true prophet asks them, “will you in that day say to the people about to slay you ‘we are gods’?” Then they will see that they were just frail men all along. It is always a source of amazement that so many wealthy and powerful people forget that they must leave all this behind at death, and as they leave this earth they are baffled and annoyed that all is lost to them.

We are all tasked with delivering the Lord’s message to his foolish creatures, that they are mortal and must give account to their creator, and that they only hope is to accept his terms for life and blessing. **Leviticus 26:41**. That same message is given by Scripture to Satan himself – for he too is judged!

The Tyrians had been blessed through their association with Israel under Solomon and could have taken advantage of this blessing and served the Lord as their God. They had tasted of the truth through their contacts with Israel, but had stayed within their pagan net. Their death as a nation will be according to the pagan rules they chose to live by, and these rules are cruel, for Satan’s team have no solidarity amongst them, only similarity in cruelty.

PASTORAL APPLICATION

1. THERE IS NO FELLOWSHIP IN SATAN’S CAMP. Many select the broad pathway of “worldliness” because it promises more fun that the narrow path of holiness that the Lord calls us to, but the promises of Satan are distortions, deceptions and lies. There is no fellowship on earth or in hell amongst his people, for self is their god, and so friendships are purely self centered and directed solely to exploit each other. Satan has no friends, and neither do his people in the end.

2. ALL HUMAN LIFE IS FRAIL. Nothing physical, financial or political, can prolong the life of a dying man. We are in the Creator/Maker’s hands alone as we advance through this life. Nothing can keep us safe in this dangerous world, except his power and walking in the safe place of his will.

3. POLITICAL, FINANCIAL OR SOCIAL SUCCESS IS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED SPIRITUALLY SIGNIFICANT. All people can have financial and political success for a time, from their own abilities, or even compliance with Satanic plans. Success of any sort indicates exactly that, temporary success; nothing more. Just as a miracle may be worked in satanic power, so success may be gained in evil, as wealthy mobsters and corrupt politicians testify to daily. We are to be discerning of all acts of power, and issues of status flowing from wealth, power or political connections. We use the discernment of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and the “fruit analysis” of the lives of the people involved, in accordance with Matthew 7:13ff, and then our assessments will be safer. Spotting the “fruits” of the satanic is critical for our own and the local church’s survival.

EZEKIEL 28:11 – 19

“11. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. 13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. 16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. 18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.”

REFLECTION

11. *Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty*.

This passage we enter into here is a glimpse into the very heart and character of Satan himself. The king of Tyre is not Satan, and these verses are not clearly literally true of this last king of Tyre, but they are true of the satanic source of his self centeredness. In this man's self absorption we see the sin of pride so well illustrated, and this is the heart of Satan's rebellion and that of all after him who follow him in rejection of the legitimate claims of God over their lives. The prophet glimpses in this prophetic word the heart of the enemy of mankind, and so we can learn "his devices" and his motivation and desires – so be warned and prepared for his work against us and the local church.

Notice the first phrases. "Thou sealest up the sum, full of beauty and perfect in wisdom". Now note carefully these words, for this king of Tyre was an amazing man, and the perfect Hollywood idol and darling of the "jet set" of his day. He was wise in the things of this world, a brilliant conversationalist, handsome and his clothing all made by the best tailors. He looked and sounded and acted as a great king, with greatness written all over him. He looked the part he claimed to play. The problem was, it was all show without truth, integrity and real power behind him. Like all the satanic players, and Satan himself, what you see is not what you get!

1. The first phrase means to be perfectly made in the best geometric proportions. The king, and Satan himself, is compared to a wonderfully constructed building that obeys all the rules of balance and proportion in it's construction. It is easy to just focus on the building, but pause and reflect upon its architect and master builder. This very phrase reminds us that both the king and Satan are "made"; they are not the Maker, but the one who has been made! Each may appear as perfect in all proportions, but only because his Maker is perfect and all he makes is perfect. **Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31**.

2. The person of the king, and the person of Satan, were both perfect in beauty. Satan is Lucifer, the "Star of the Morning"; he was the most beautiful creature God made, but the last point is the key; God made him, he was not self made! Kings and Caesars may think they are "gods" but they are simply fooled by demons, and pay the fatal price for their self delusion. Behind the "gods" of the pagans are demons. **Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, Psalm 106:28-48.**

3. The king of Tyre had great wisdom according to the standards of mankind. He had education, wisdom and knowledge of trade and seafaring, but he did not have "all wisdom", he just thought he had. This was a day when a person could read all the books and have a knowledge of all things known by man, but wise men and women recognized that they knew only what was "known" to that point. True wisdom, and great knowledge will have humility at it's heart, for every true scientist recognizes what they don't know is far greater than what they do! Both this man and Satan erred in this point; for they did not recognize that humility was logical and right! Once again Jesus words in **Matthew 7:13-23** come to mind; by their fruits we know their origins and their "gods" – and arrogance and over-estimation of ability and intelligence proves the foolishness of the satanic. **Psalm 2:1ff.**

13 *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created*.

This twelfth verse makes it clear that this passage refers well beyond the current king of Tyre to the one of whom he is an example; Satan himself. It was Satan who was there even in the Garden of Eden. **Genesis 3:1ff, 2 Corinthians 11:5, Revelation 12:9, 20:2.** He was there well before Adam and Eve, and he was the "cherub who covered the throne". Notice, that he was, before his fall, the leading Archangel! He had the honour of service as the leader of the angelic host and he rebelled to try to seize power from the one who made him and gave him his dignity!

This is Zedekiah of Judah and the king of Tyre's sin, for they have been delivered from Assyrian domination by Babylonian power and placed on their thrones by Nebuchadnezzar's power, grace and favour, and yet they will rebel against the king they owe their life and wealth to! They have erred into Satan's sin of gross ingratitude and arrogance. The glory of the appearance of Satan is described in terms of precious stones that shone with brilliance. The beauty of his voice was like a pipe organ, and his appearance as of the most amazing creature.

14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Satan had the most important position of all the angels, and had been set there by God himself. He was made and positioned by the creator for God's glory, honour and majesty to be seen by all forever, but Satan wanted that glory for himself and would not give it properly to the one who gave him all things that led to glory. The demand of the Lord is for humility, worship, and acceptance of reality on the part of his creatures. It is our "reasonable service", **Romans 12:1-2**, and yet those who are influenced by Satan follow after arrogance, pride and rebel against the one they owe their very lives to.

Humble Worship is not a difficult thing, nor is it inappropriate. Why does a creature seek glory and honour for them self and not for their Maker who gave them everything? It is baffling, and only has its explanation in the pride and arrogance of the self centered man or woman. Pride and arrogance fatally distorts people's thinking. This is what we call the "baffling mystery of evil", for it is rebellion against reason itself. Satan is truly the deceiver, distorter and distracter from truth, and the first he deceives is him self!

Satan's role and place was most glorious, and he knew the holy perfection of his maker and was the guardian of the throne itself, yet he sought to sit upon the throne! His rebellion was not the fault of his maker, for he was made perfectly. The fault was "found in him"; it emerged from within the depths of his being. Once again we are reminded that Satan was "created" and owed his worship to his maker, but put his energy into thinking he had the power and intellect to replace his maker rather than honouring Him. Just so the rebellion of mankind is without logic or excuse and will bring eternal judgment. **Revelation 20:11-15**.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

The king of Tyre was a "wheeler dealer", just like Satan, and he and his people remain "players" to our own day; Satan deals in selfishness and evil, in deception and lies, and makes merchandise of people for his own ends. Satan created the first violence from the religion of Cain, who would not accept the need to bring a blood sacrifice, for he believed the fruit of his labours was sufficient to bring to God. He rejected the sin of his life as significant and rejected the need for a sacrifice for his sins. This is the satanic blood-less religion that always leads to violence, just as it leads to the first murder. **Genesis 3:17-21, 4:3-8**.

Study the so called "great revolutions" in man's history and within months high ideals become ruthless blood thirsty murder, be it the "revolutions" of ancient Rome, in France, and even the climate activism of today's environmental, animal rights, and anti-GM groups. The most violent groups on the planet in 2020 are the "peace groups"…. No surprises when we understand Ezekiel and Isaiah's biography of Satan. Pride never remains alone; it is joined quickly by arrogance, self centeredness, hatred, and finally by murder.

Though Satan had the highest position in heaven he was removed from his place because of his great sin of pride, with its hatred of God and all the goodness that God represents. Pride destroys all who follow it's deadly lie, and is the main, if not sole, reason for unsaved mankind being in the Lake of Fire with Satan and those angels who followed him. **Revelation 20:11-15**. Final judgment will occur, but in the meantime all who follow pride will experience being cast down by their maker at some point, for that is his last appeal to them to repent.

For Nebuchadnezzar it was mental and physical illness, **Daniel 4:23-32**, and for others it is sickness, defeat in war, or sickness and dying itself. All human beings at some point face their mortality and have the last opportunity to repent, but Satan remains staunch in his rebellion to the end, and so does the king of Tyre; sadly that is the false courage of the satanic, staunch to the end in their hatred of God and determined not ever to bow their knee to God. No logic will shift them from their fondly held lie, to the truth. **Isaiah 14:9-20, Matthew 23:37-39**.

18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

The Lake of Fire in Revelation apparently becomes alive with eternal fire from the very source of the evil within evil people, demons and Satan himself.

This verse explains the ultimate justice of God, and the ultimate in justice from God, in that Satan's own motive power leads to his eternal judgment and everlasting death. He is apparently burned up from the very evil that is within himself, rather than being "zapped" from the outside by God, he is punished forever from within himself.

Pride, Hatred, Despising of others, Rebellion against love, truth, grace and mercy, pollutes the life and the soul and all that is around the person who has rebelled. Finally all pride based rebellions implode upon themselves because you cannot release great evil without it turning on the very people who have set it loose.

Most of the great evil rebels and tyrants of history die by the very evils they have unleashed from within themselves, for there isn't any other outcome, given the evil powers that they let consume them in their arrogant over-estimation of their ability to control events and people. Satan's end is full and final in the Lake of Fire, and he is eliminated from the new creation forever with all who followed his deception. Is the Lake of Fire forever? The answer here, from this passage alone is "possibly no". This should not surprise us if we have read **2 Peter 3:10ff** and **Revelation 21**, for this earth and indeed the whole of this space-time creation, of which the Lake of Fire is a part, are imploded at the end of the Millennial Kingdom and there is a completely new creation. And yet this is **not** necessarily the whole picture.

Time and space are dimensions of this present creation, and the glimpse John gets of the next creation indicates by his poetic language that this is a new dimension altogether; which is what we should expect anyway. Hell exists until it is emptied into the Lake of Fire, and it burns until time ends, and the entire old space-time creation dissolves in "fervent heat". Satan is eliminated, with those who follow him "forever"; that is "until time ends". But are they gone, never to be heard of, or thought of again. They are the detritus of the old creation, but pause and look closer at our own and the following passages. **2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1, 4-5, 8, 27, Revelation 22:3-5**.

Walk slowly and thoughtfully here, and remember John and Peter are describing what occurs as this universe of space-time ends, and eternity is all in all, and so our own thinking processes are inadequate at this point, for we cannot have a thought that isn't limited by space-time categories of thinking. Hell and the Lake of Fire appear to be confined to this present creation, and even possibly to this earth itself. The new heavens and the new earth, are exactly that, completely new. There is a new Jerusalem but it is not in any physical relationship to the geography of this present earth, for this present earth is gone, replaced by a new one, and if you sketch the description of the new Jerusalem from Revelation 21 you will see that John is describing a "structure", if that be the right term for eternity, that is more akin to a space station than anything known in John's day or even now.

The only hesitation we have in all this is John's reference in **Revelation 21:8**, and **21:27,** to the Lake of Fire, as if, like a "black hole" in our own present/temporary space-time universe, it still exists in the new creation, in some way, as a reminder of the choices that fallen angels and men once made, and that all the rebellious creatures and their evil choices are indeed eternal, and they suffer eternal punishment, but without causing any distress to believers in the new heavens and earth. **Revelation 21:4-5**.

Physicists tell us that the actual matter of the entire universe could be compressed into a space no greater than a very small house, although it would be of infinite weight! Maybe the entire universe is imploded (as Peter sees) and actually this space-time universe in compressed-imploded form becomes the "Lake of Fire"; a glowing entity (that he describes as a "lake" because of its appearance to him) within which all who fell and selected evil remain forever entrapped, but without any distress to those within the new creation, for all know that every creature has got forever exactly what they wanted.

We have desired eternity with the Lord God, our Creator and Savior and King, but from Satan down to his lowest servant, they have desired eternity without God, and that is exactly what they get forever. That is the concept behind John's vision of the "Lake of Fire" – it is way worse than Dante's vision, it is to be locked in burning hopelessness and the anguish of nothing around you but evil forever. The ultimate judgment is knowing that this is exactly what you selected at every God rejecting and ignoring moment of your life.

PASTORAL APPLICATION

1. ALL WE KNOW HERE IS TEMPORARY. Even our "scientific principles", where correct, only apply for this universe and this creation, at this space-time. Time-Space itself is a creation and it "ends", as does the earth and all who rebelled upon it! We need to get a strong biblical grasp of the words of Peter and John and Ezekiel and stand in holy fear and trembling before the facts of the temporary nature of this all too solid, read "fragile and doomed" world! We may know physics and sub-molecular biology, and yet we do not apply it.

All that is solid to the touch is simply atoms in arrangement. All will implode at the end and the universe and all that is part of it will be gone in a moment, and only those who through the gift of eternal life have gained their place in the next world will enter it by the grace and mercy of the creator. We need to preach this truth more powerfully than we have to date.

2. PRIDE IS FOOLISHNESS. For a creature to try to replace their creator is to lose one's mind! There is no logic to such rebellion; pride and arrogance alone produces this evil stupidity. All who do this are rightly judged by Almighty God. The gift of life is eternal, and even though the heavens implode, in some way there is a memory of angelic and evil men's rebellion in the eternal presence of the lake of fire, (within which all the rebels live forever in judgment), but without any distress, for all see the perfect Justice and Righteousness of God then. **Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8, 27.**

Let us now read the second of the key passages on the nature of Satan and evil, and lets see it as we did with Ezekiel's passage in its context.

Isaiah 14:12-17

Isaiah's visions of the Babylonian captivity, still 120 years away at the point he writes, continue here, with the solid promise of deliverance, with the glory of God returning to the land. Both Judah and Israel are to be blessed by God, and the whole land of the twelve tribes of Israel is repopulated and blessed. We face here a "prophetic word", and the liberal critics hate all such supernatural words, for they cannot accept that God exists, other than as a "force", let alone speaks to people. They certainly don't want Isaiah to be speaking about the nature of Satan in the midst of this! Liberals hate prophecy – but they hate discussion of Satan even more.

At this time Assyria is the dominant "evil empire", and has even conquered Babylon, so it must have seemed inconceivable that **firstly** the Jewish people would be taken by Babylon rather than Assyria, but then **secondly**, that having been taken there, (at the time of Isaiah an inferior power), they would then be delivered from their power by another power (Media-Persia) and returned to their land in joy and their return will be to the glory of God.

These words will bring great comfort to the believers of the next generation under Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who will cling to these words of Isaiah, and they will be the cause of glory and celebration for the generations of Ezra and Nehemiah, which will see them fully fulfilled, with the walls of Jerusalem rebuilt from 445 BC.

1 For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. 2 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

God's promise is unequivocal; he will deliver Jacob, and he will yet choose Israel (all 12 tribes) as his people. This is a clear reference to the remnant of the northern ten tribes, all descendants of the sons of Jacob, who at this time are going into Assyrian captivity, or fleeing south for safety. It would have been beyond belief to those of Isaiah's day around 720 BC, that such a deliverance could ever occur, yet it would in 535 BC when the Exiles are allowed to return, and around 445 BC when the edict to rebuild the walls occurs. **Ezra 1:1-4, Habakkuk 2:2-4, Jeremiah 30:16-21, Zechariah 1:14-17.**

The restoration of Israel to the land would only be the beginning of the complete fulfillment of this prophecy. Through the discipline of Israel the "Age of the Gentiles" would begin and the whole world would be blessed. Out of the great darkness of despair and pain, caused through their disobedience, would come the greatest blessing in the history of man in the person of the Messiah. **Romans 8:28-39, Ephesians 2:14-18**.

Pause here and reflect upon this prophecy, for as with all in this book, there was no indication that it could be true at the time. The people were called to faith and to walking in the expectation of fulfillment, but their generation did not see it. **Hebrews 11:1-2, 39-40, 1 Peter 1:10-12**. God's Word is always to be more real to us than our circumstances! Let us reflect upon this, for it is later in the chapter when Isaiah will speak of Satan. The key concept when facing the angelic conflict is that you must choose – is God's Word believed, or do you trust your eyes and human logic? If you trust your eyes and human logic you are open to deception and distraction, as Satan delights in leading mankind astray from the Word.

The liberals attack the last part of Isaiah and try to push it into later centuries to avoid the prophetic elements, as they do also with Daniel, yet these early chapters present equal problems for those who delight in doubt!

There is no way around the prophetic reality of this chapter, for it's words would await fulfillment for three hundred years, and through that time would be a source of comfort to the people and be quoted by the later prophets, so we are sure of when this oracle was given!

All of this book speaks of God's foreknowledge and provision for his people under pressure. **Isaiah 12:2**. There is no problem with God knowing the future, for he is God! Those who have "difficulties" have them because they do not know God, and do not want to believe God either exists, or is as powerful as He is! Just like Satan, who rejects all the truths about God also!

At the time Isaiah speaks, Israel and Judah are despised minor nations, with their enemies biting at their heels, seeking their goods as plunder. Isaiah prophecies that instead of being plunder, under Messiah one day, Israel will be an object of respect and spiritual power, with the Gentile nations clinging to them for blessing by association.

Isaiah sees into the future when the people of Israel, restored by God will rule over those who oppressed them, with those from nations who ruled over them being their servants. He sees a complete reversal of the present situation. Paul sees this being fulfilled further in prophecy received in his own day. **Romans 15:27, 2 Corinthians 8:4-5, Galatians 5:13.** When we read the words of scripture, do we see the Lord's promises as being more real than our pressures? Do we see with eyes of faith or does the present physical reality overwhelm us?

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, 4 That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!

On that day of deliverance they will lift up a song of joy, for they will see and enjoy the blessing of God. The challenge for the people of Isaiah's day, as for ours, is to praise the Lord for his coming deliverance, well in advance of it's arrival, and so win the battle of faith over fear. They had been warned of their terrible judgment by Moses in **Deuteronomy 28:47-68,** but in the midst of the judgment there is hope. Even though they would be scattered in captivity in 720 BC, again in 586 BC, and then again in 70 AD, yet they would be restored and blessed, as they returned to the Lord their God. **Deuteronomy 30:1-10, Ezra 9:6-12.**

Ezra's prayer recognizes the blessing of God that has returned to them through God's grace and their obedience. All their torture **will** one day be over, and God is the one who will do it! These words are not yet fully fulfilled, for they await the final return of the King. The King of Babylon is referred to well in advance of the power of their nation growing to prominence again. Isaiah gives hope for those under the domination of Babylon after 586 BC, for he tells them that in one day all the splendour of that great empire will be brought down.

Once again the challenge is to see things with God's sight rather than man's sight. Assyria looked invincible, even when they were besieged in their city it still looked hopeless for the coalition, yet Nineveh falls when her walls came down. Babylon looked invincible against the Medes, so much so that Belshazzar held a drunken party inside the city under siege, so confident was he in his army and the defences of the great city. God judged both empires in one day each. It is God who raises up and God who casts down. Being rightly related to God in humble worship, and rightly related to God's Eternal Plan in humble obedience is the only path to lasting blessing and joy. **1 Peter 5:5-10**.

5 The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. 6 He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.

It is the Lord who breaks the rod of oppression, and destroys the power of those who persecute his people. He alone is the deliverer. The oppressors appeared to be without end, and their affliction to be on-going to the total destruction of the people, yet the Lord stayed their hand and ended their rule. They showed no mercy yet they were unable to destroy Israel for the Lord protected them. **Psalms 125:2-3, Jeremiah 48:16-17, Daniel 7:19-22, James 2:13.**

No matter what the malice of our enemies the Lord will protect his remnant according to faith, and we can rest secure in his arms. **Deuteronomy 33:27, Psalms 90:2, 100:5, 103:17, Isaiah 54:8, 60:19-20.**

7 The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. 8 Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

The whole earth has moved in these verses into a place of security where even the trees are safe from the axe. The armies of the ancient world took delight in chopping down forests and using the wood for their defences, their siege ramps, and their fires.

The destruction of all living things, including trees, was one of the ways an invader arrogantly and maliciously proved their dominance and power. Satan's "fruit" is always destruction – he cannot build, nor create anything except carnage, and his people are known by the same satanic fruit. **Galatians 5:19-26**.

The two trees mentioned, the fir (Aleppo Pine) and the cedar are the two valuable and sought after trees of the mountains of Lebanon. In prosperity men often would build palaces and ships of these trees, but in the prosperity of Messiah there will be no need for these great trees to be felled, and all will be able to enjoy them. Creation itself bursts into songs of praise at what God has done. The Lord rests, as he did in Eden, for the work of the deliverance of man from sin, evil and death is finally completed, and all creation rests. At present it groans! **Romans 8:22-26, 2 Corinthians 5:2-4**. It is quite appropriate that Isaiah will move to discuss the fate of Satan himself in the next verses, for it is the destruction of his power over men that opens up the rule of Christ over all of the creation. **Psalms 96:11-13, 126:1-3.**

9 Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. 10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?

There is a stirring in hell itself awaiting the arrival of these great evil kings who persecuted the people of God. It is not that they are respected by the other inhabitants of hell, some who they murdered, they all equally despise each other! There is no fellowship in hell, nor is there any fellowship within Satan's camp, for they are all narcissists; they worship only themselves, power, money and other lusts, and such things do not build teams. For even though these evil kings were feared in life, their fall into hell underlines the certainty of the fate of all evil people. **Ezekiel 31:15-18, Zechariah 11:1-3.**

They know surely that their fate is now eternally sealed, for if the great kings of earth have fallen into hell so will all be finally judged. This is why the Lord referred to hell as the place of "weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth". **Matthew 8:12, 13:42, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30**. Hell/Hades is simply the waiting place for the last judgment, described at the end of time in **Revelation 20:11-15**. There is no fellowship in hell or the lake of fire, only mutual despising.

There is also the indication of some level of revenge on the part of the lesser kings, perhaps even the ones killed by the great kings; the lesser now can mock the great, for they are all in the same place! This is the horror of hell; for all men who emphasize "stuff" as the distinction between them and others, then must confront the fact that all their wealth or power is of no concern or value whatever, for it is too late to be saved, and finally they see that this was the only issue for life! The meditation upon the frailty of pleasure and the certainty of death is a common theme of the prophets. **Job 17:1ff, 24:17-25, 21:11-18, Ezekiel 26:13-14, 32:19-32, Daniel 5:1-4, 18-30, Amos 6:1-6.**

The Biblical revelation is clear; man is here to confront only one issue within the context of the Angelic Conflict, and that is the answer to the question, will a person worship their true Creator or will he/she be distracted by the things this life has to offer? For all those who have fretted and worried about "stuff" (wealth, power, sexual pleasure, renown, position in the affairs of their nations), or have actually seized and taken such things and trampled over others to get them, the end is the same!

They are all there together in hell, the people who worried and plotted to get the great wealth they felt they deserved, and those who stood on their heads, crushed them, and actually got it off them! Those who enjoyed their ill gotten gains, and those who strived but failed to obtain, so called "winners and losers", they are all together in hell waiting for the God they ignored to judge them all.

All see at that point that all their efforts were for things that do not last; all their efforts were wasted time. The abusers and the abused are all categorized under one name; "lost", for they ignored their Creator, their true King and Saviour.

They are lost because they were distracted from the one thing that did matter, and that was their worship of the one true God of all. Refer to BTB doctrines below of HEAVEN AND HELL, HELL AND HADES, and JUDGMENT.

11 *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. 12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

These men delighted in being covered in the finest of clothes and being surrounded by the "best of people" and all the "stuff" that their great wealth could buy. The prophet is blunt, for their fate, as the fate of all others who die without Christ, is that their bodies are covered with maggots now, which devour their flesh and the clothing left with them.

Their graves are like the graves of all others; they all have a rotting stinking corpse in them. There is no sound of pomp and ceremony only the gentle gnawing of the maggots as they devour the flesh off their bones. It is a truthful and shocking image.

The great ruthless murdering king of Assyria, possibly Sennacherib, is pictured as a falling star, once so secure in his place, casting others down, yet now falling uncontrollably downwards himself, totally unable to stop his fall into Hell – powerless before his eternal fate and the God he insulted. The language used of the evil human king is also a reference to the author of his evil, and the mentor for his rulership; the prince of this world, Satan himself. **Luke 10:18, John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11.**

Satan has the power of most of the kingdoms of man in his hand, for those who are obsessed with ruling delight in the distractions that Satan uses to ensnare man. Study the passages on the temptation of the Lord and see clearly there that Jesus doesn't debate Satan's claim to have the kings of all the earth obeying him! **Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13**. Refer to the BTB studies below on SATAN, his nature, strategy, work, and final destiny. His name, Lucifer, means "star of light", and he is also titled, "son of the morning". The symbolism is clear in Semitic thought; that as the "day star", he is the brilliant one, the bright and shining one, and the one who comes to believe that he made himself and is the self existent one! This is the star that draws attention to itself by its brilliance when other stars are waning, and hence becomes a potent symbol of self absorbed pride.

This prophecy regarding the fall of the Assyrian, or Babylonian King, indicates exactly what will happen finally to their lord, Satan himself. This prophecy became the template for Ezekiel's prophecy later regarding the king of Tyre, which reminded Israel that the author of sin and evil will be judged, just as his servants are also. **Ezekiel 28:1-24.**

Satan is the bright and shining one, the cherub of covering, and the most beautiful creature that God ever made. He is not the little red devil with the horns and pitchfork; that is a cartoon! He is very powerful, but yet "greater is he that is in us than the ruler of this present world!" **1 John 4:4**. The Holy Spirit filled believer is superior to Satan, and our destiny is way more positive, powerful and secure.

We need be in no fear of the enemy, for walking in the Holy Spirit we have superior power and resources and are safe within the plan of God that will work out. The stars may fall but the plan will not fail. All the great "stars" of this world will fall down into hell, but we will, in Christ, enter into our heavenly reward. Refer to BTB – doctrine of ETERNAL SECURITY, and also, MENTAL ATTITUDE, for our stability comes from being grounded in the reality of God's character and perfect plan for mankind and history itself. The nations may rage and imagine all "vain things", but God is in charge. "Man proposes but God disposes". **Psalms 2:1, Acts 4:25.**

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

We now have very specifically described the thinking process of Satan when he fell and also of all those who follow him in their imitation of his evil. They begin by believing their own publicity, thinking they are perfect and beautiful above all things. **Ezekiel 27:3, 28:2, 29:3, Daniel 4:30-31, Zephaniah 2:15.**

Having let pride enter into the thinking patterns, the mind was perverted from the truth and Satan walked the path of self-deceptive pride and in his arrogance he lifted himself up to seize the very throne and authority of God.

At its heart their pride is taking the authority and dignity of the mighty creator God and applying them wrongly to themselves, who are but his creatures. The first one deceived by Satan's false logic was him self!

They firstly aim at the heavens, to lift themselves up to dwell upon the "mount of God", whereas they are doomed to go down to hell itself for their great presumption and evil.

As many commentators have pointed out, this is not mount Zion in Jerusalem that is being referred to, for it is not in the north, but the south of the city.

The pagan kings of Babylon, Assyria, Greece, the Persians and Indians in the high Himalayas; all had their deities on cloud covered mountains to their north. These men, like the one the follow look to the misty mountains for awesomeness and mystery; they are drawn to mysticism and misty grandeur calling it divine, yet it is simply the awesome creation of the infinitely more awesome Creator God. They deify the creation calling it the creator showing the extent of their self deception! **Ezekiel 28:9, 12-19, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.**

In verse fourteen they go even further, yet their language indicates that they are deceived, for they try to replace God, yet realize in their words that they are simply trying to "be like" the most high, but they are not the most high. Such foolishness is baffling, for they indicate that they see they are not God, yet they persist in the deception of themselves that they will actually escape the consequences of their evil and arrogance. Their doom is settled as a result of such attitudes, and they will certainly fall down to the very recesses of the pit of hell itself.

They thought to lift themselves up, like Hercules of myth to enter heaven and seize the throne of God, but they will end up in a side chamber of hell itself, not the throne room of God. The aimed at the misty mountains of their demon-gods, but they will find the lake of the fire of the holiness of the true God of all. **Revelation 20:10-15.** The women and men chose the company of demons to God, and so they share their fate. Satan selected a path that he thought would make him ruler of all, but he ends up being locked together eternally with all those he deceived in the lake of fire! All the narcissists together!!!

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; 17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

In hell the inhabitants will look at these great kings and wonder, for they are all there, the great conquerors and those they conquered. The greedy murderers, hungry for objects of their lusts, and the ones they murdered, equally driven by their own lusts, are all together as pagans in the pit of hell awaiting God's final disposal to join Satan and his demons forever.

They made their choices in time and some considered themselves winners, and many of the others the "winners" despised as "losers", yet in eternity they are all losers, for they did not know God and so never entered into salvation. These great kings will be the source of wonder and black humour in hell from those they murdered, for they are all there together, thoroughly despising and insulting each other. The "losers" will say to one another the words recorded here.

Many of the inhabitants of hell of that day will recall that they died of starvation in the prisons of these men, for they never released their prisoners, and now they are all together in the prison of hell, never to be released until the day they fall into the Lake of Fire after their master Satan has ignited it with his very substance. The Lord will judge the evil of all who follow the prince of evil. **Psalms 52:6-9, 58:10-11, 64:9-10.**

18 All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. 19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

Even decent burial will be denied these great kings, for their death in battle or rebellion will mean that their bodies are dragged through the streets and trodden under the feet of their enemies. Many of the pagans will say that they are simply looking to "sleep with their fathers" in honour in the graves prepared for them, in a place of honour in the middle of their city. Like Constantine the Great buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles in the middle of the great city he built. The church and his sarcophagus was looted by pagan crusaders in 1204, then again by the Turkish conqueror, who made the site a mosque, (Fatih Cami), and the bodies of the great emperor and all others buried there are lost…..

Great funerals and grand tombs sound very noble and fine yet they are all deception, for the final end of man is not “decent burial”, but eternity. It is not the fate of the body that determines worth or value of a person’s life, but the works done of eternal significance. These men have a physical frame of reference only and show by their lavish burials that they value their frail and now dead corpses rather than their works, yet it is their works that will be the basis of their eternal judgment. Right until the end they deceive themselves as to what is of value and what matters before Almighty God their creator and judge.

To dishonour a corpse was the final insult according to pagan man, yet the very thing they fear will happen to them all, and there was actually a far worse thing all along – and they have now discovered it – eternity without hope or fellowship.

Even if they are buried they will be dug up and cut to pieces by the swords of their enemies. Many bodies of these people were literally cut up as the conquerors hunted amongst the graves for the wealth buried there. Nearly all the great Pharaohs were dug up and their tombs looted for the wealth buried there, or they were excavated by curious archaeologists. Their glory did not last, and even their bodies are now curiosities, peered at through glass cases. Those whose glance would bring death in their lives are now just “exhibit number….”, set out for tourists in a museum.

***20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned. 21 Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities*.**

The reasons for their destruction and the insults to their corpses are now given by the prophet of God. As they have done to others so it is done to them; there is justice finally for all they have slain unjustly. They are not united with their ancestors in their burials because of the great murders they were guilty of and the destruction they brought to their own land because of their campaigns.

This was the day when the kings would make the land waste with their armies, destroying civilizations and then building new cities to replace the ones they burned and calling them after themselves, but this will not happen with these men, for they will not leave new dynasties, but their sons will be all killed and none will rise up to honour or carry on their name. There are no Assyrians, or any Babylonians today; these words were completely fulfilled within years of the utterance of this prophecy. Assyria was gone completely, and Babylon was inhabited by other people groups for the final thousand years of its life. **Psalms 21:6-13, 37:27-28, 109:13-15.**

22 *For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD. 23 I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.*

It is the Lord who will rise up to destroy Babylon and will do it thoroughly. When the Lord judges he does so completely. No longer will princes live there, it will become the haunt of hedgehogs and marsh creatures. The total contrast between the works of man in Babylon and the judging work of God afterwards would have shocked the hearers of this first prophecy, for they looked at Babylon as permanent, yet in God’s sight no work of man is permanent. We fool ourselves if we think we have anything here of any permanence.

All that is built can be torn down, and all that is lifted up can be shaken by the forces of nature and be rendered a pile of rubble. If the Lord does not build the house it will not stand, and even if the Lord builds it is only for a time and then it is wiped away having done it’s purpose, for all the things of this earth are simply the things of this earth and only the eternal matters.

24 *The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: 25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. 26 This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. 27 For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*

When the Lord has determined an event it is determined; his plan will work out for it is based upon all the facts and takes into account the free will of rebellious men and sees the end before the beginning. God is beyond time, not within it like we all are! It is when we forget this that we get into confusion, yet seeing it is confusing, for we cannot even think this way.

This is Isaiah's reminder that we are speaking of the Lord of all, the creator of all, and the plan is far bigger than the universe itself. Those who thought they could out think God are well out of their league. **Psalms 33:10-12, 92:5-8, Proverbs 19:21-23, Acts 4:28.** As the apostles identified, we are all safe in the hands of the author of the plan and even if we suffer we can relax in the plan for it will work out for his glory and our eternal blessing. **Romans 8:28-31.**

The Assyrians were so powerful that the mention of their name brought fear and dread to all in that area, yet they were to be wiped away with no remnant of them to remember their awesomeness, for they turned from God and worshipped evil. All who walk away from God will face judgment and in that day they will know why they are judged and acknowledge it's justice.

There is no mercy for those who persist in showing no mercy; there is no acquittal for those who walk according to their own lusts, and they must face the consequences of falling into such evil as they fall. **Nahum 1:3, 13**. God's hand is stretched out over all the nations to judge and to lift the burden off his people.

This is the plan that God has "purposed" and it will occur. Isaiah's words are carefully chosen to encourage the people that they are in the Lord's hands, not the hands of the nations around them. Reflect again upon the BTB doctrine of THE PLAN OF GOD, for this is the hope of saved man in a difficult place.

If we are his children shall he not do well with us? While we were yet sinners God died for us, so shall he do less for us now as his children? This is the logic of the doctrines of the Plan of God and the Character of God applied into the doctrine of Testing or Suffering. Refer to BTB and look again at the doctrine of SUFFERING.

Do a word study in your concordance for the words "much" and "more" and see the extensive number of verses in Paul's letters that have these words in them that teach us that we are under the "much more" care of the loving God who gave his all to save us in accordance with his perfect and victorious plan. We are secure because the Plan of God is based upon the Character of God; it cannot be changed or moved!

God is gracious and patient, but the day is set, in accordance with the plan, when that patience runs out and the Lord acts in judgment. Israel will be judged for their sin of worshipping evil and doing what is not right, and that day is drawing close in the days when Ahaz dies and his son Hezekiah begins his rule. Read through **2 Kings 17:1-18**, for in it the logic of the judgment of Israel is spelt out and also the exact location of the "lost twelve tribes" at that time. They were never "lost" and from them some will return under Nehemiah and Ezra, others are returning today, and modern DNA analysis is helping identify the various inheritances of the twelve tribes, and they appear to be all there – I expected that….

The Northern Kingdom is judged and so is the Southern Kingdom, and both for the same reason; they followed evil when good was there to be followed. The stories are brought together in 2 Chronicles 28:19-27. There is hope and there is revival in the land under Hezekiah however and it begins with the Temple's restoration to centrality in the life of the people. **2 Chronicles 29:1-36**. He also begins to lead a revival for the remnant of the northern people also. **2 Chronicles 30:1-12, 31:4-7.**

The attention shifts from prophecies regarding Assyria and Babylon to the action in the south of Judea, where the Philistines had used the opportunity offered by the Syro-Ephraimitish War to seize six cities from Judah and hold them until after the death of Ahaz.

This prophecy is securely dated to the year of Ahaz death and tells the story in advance of the defeat of the Greek peoples in the south, for the Philistines were the "Sea Peoples", the proto Greek people of the group that fought the Trojan War and then moved south into the Mediterranean, harassed Egypt and settled the southern coast line of Judah around the time of the Exodus. They had advanced Iron Age culture and a military system that led to their dominance for a time. They were tall and cultured and powerful men who worshipped the culture of the hero, so they fought well.

The Philistines were enemies to be respected, and prayed over, for they followed demonic religions, yet they would be swept away just as the Assyrians had been. God's Plan was unfolding, and the only issue for believers was orienting themselves to God's will for their lives and being obedient and utilizing all divine operating assets – mainly being Holy Spirit empowered! The pagans who did not reject Satan's lie and follow the One True God would be swept away in time, just as Satan himself will be in accordance with the timing of the Plan.

28 In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden. 29 Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.

The Lord's words through Isaiah come at the time of Ahaz death, for it is the time of revival and the people are now listening again to the voice of his prophet. Philistia was still rejoicing with their victories over Judah at this time, feeling that their military might could keep them secure in the villages and towns they had seized from Ahaz. They are warned that they will be beaten when they least expect it.

They think that they have killed any serpent that can bite them, but a more powerful snake will replace it, and then it will certainly kill them suddenly.

They were beaten by Uzziah, **2 Chronicles 26:6,** and he was their "rod", but his house is broken with the death of Ahaz. However they do not see that the new young King Hezekiah will be more spiritual than all his ancestors other than David, and he will be their rod again.

While these verses may apply to the Assyrian kings that will deal with these people also, and that suits the context of the whole chapter, Isaiah's announcement of the specific timing of this prophecy in terms of Ahaz death would indicate that it is the kings of Judah that are in view here. However both views lead us to magnify the grace of God, for we see his provision for Judah through all events that will occur.

Let us look at the three things/snakes referred to here. Firstly the serpent's root, secondly the cockatrice, and thirdly the fiery serpent, or fire breathing, flying dragon, all potentially satanic images. We must be careful however, for the snake was also the symbol of wisdom, lethal speed, danger to others, and even healing. The nation of Judah has become a mere "root" of what it was, for the wars of the day have reduced them to a shadow of their former self under David, Solomon or even of Uzziah. But out of this "rump" left in the ground will come a "basilisk", a fierce and powerful great snake that kills immediately, and out of that is the flying dragon of their final judgment.

The traditional explanation of this in the Jewish Targum was that there was an immediate and future reference here; firstly to the work of Hezekiah "son of David", in judgment, and finally to the power of the one the Rabbis would call "Messiah Ben David" (we identify as Jesus at the Second Advent when he returns as King of kings) at the end of this phase of time. The dragon is not only a symbol of evil, but a symbol of power, might, majesty, and judgment from which none may escape. In the case of Hezekiah, there is no biblical record that he defeated the Philistines, nor did he directly defeat the Assyrians, but God in grace defeated them both for him, sending the angel of the Lord to slay them in a night with a terrible plague, and previously God had used Assyria to destroy Philistia. **2 Kings 19:34-37, Isaiah 37-38**.

Finally the Assyrian Empire will destroy the Philistines and capture even Egypt itself (671-651 BC). How is it then that Hezekiah can be said to defeat them or bring judgment, for it comes in the hands of others? It may be that he does this by spiritual revival and prayer; God then fighting for him, but he gets the benefit and grace and peace.

The alternative explanation of this passage is that the root and the snakes refer to the house of Sennacherib, murdered by his own sons, and then yet another son, Esar Haddon, and his sons after him become even more powerful "serpents" of judgment than their father and grandfather were.

So as we see from this, a passage like this may have two interpretations, both equally true and relevant. For whether it is judgment directly by the house of David, or the indirect judgment by others, the Philistines will be judged because of their attacks upon the house of David. God has a plan and those who attack its centre with their satanic malice, (the house of David remains at the centre of God's Plan), need to be very scared, for they will not escape!

30 And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant. 31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times. 32 What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

The people of the nation Judah were by this time very poor, with their entire land under Assyrian dominance, and yet they would be delivered by the Lord and the poorest people would eat of the bounty of the land, just as the Exodus generation's children would after they entered the land. **Joshua 1:1-11.**

To stand against the demonic forces, by using God's methods (prayer of faith and obedience to the revealed Word) is to stand on the Rock and to see the enemy defeated, either directly or by others.

The Philistine nation is to be told that they will suffer thoroughly, being destroyed to their very root. While the remnant of Judah will be delivered, the remnant of Philistia will be utterly destroyed. They will be destroyed by an army that marches against them without gaps in its ranks!

What the prophet sees is the mighty Assyrian army in all it's military precision and order, advancing over the plains of Gaza and destroying the great city States of the Philistines. The fire of God's wrath will be executed by the might of Assyria moving like a fire breathing dragon swiftly over the lands to the south of Jerusalem.

All the Plan of God centres in Jerusalem; it is the centre of the Plan of God for this universe, and for it's sake and the king that will sit on it's throne, the people are either judged or delivered. Judgment or deliverance depends upon the attitude of a people towards Jerusalem and it's once and future king!

The Lord is the great Rock/Stone upon which men are broken or built! **Psalms 118:22, Isaiah 28:16, Daniel 2:34-35, Zechariah 12:3, Matthew 21:42-44, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:6-18, 1 Peter 2:4-8**. Also refer to BTB doctrine of ROCK – CHRIST THE ROCK. **Hebrews 12:22-27**.

APPLICATION PRINCIPLES FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY

1. God's promises regarding his children are unequivocal; he will deliver us from all troubles, and finally deliver us into his very presence, in order that we may be face to face with him forever. Do we settle in the everlasting arms, or are we like a colic distressed baby and wriggle out of his protective plan for us? We are safe with the promises of God, within the Plan of God, but no-where else in this world! Satanic malice is constant, but inefficient and controlled in its execution by Almighty God. What is never episodic, or anything other than stable and strong, is God's Love for us. "Underneath us all are always the everlasting arms". **Deuteronomy 33:27**.

2. Is God's Word more real to us than the troublesome experiences we face? God says that he will deliver and he will end this phase of world history his way, and he will. Satan is like all the "Fast Food Specials", "for a limited time only"! Let us rejoice in our God now as well as when the promises are fulfilled. The challenge of mature belief is the challenge to express faith in God's Plan and answers to prayer in joy, "with thanksgiving", in advance of any other evidence of reason for joy other than the promises of the living Word of the mighty and delivering God! **Philippians 4:6, Hebrews 11:1-3**.

3. There will be a millennial kingdom upon the earth, and it will come after the risen Lord returns as the King, but until then the creation groans, as we do. This doesn't mean we despise the earth and exploit it destructively, or that we become militant environmentalists. The Christian balance exists within the two extremes; we will use the resources without plunder and destruction as good stewards, as we are ordered by the Lord in Genesis 1-3, but we will not stress ourselves about the environment, for we are not here to clean up the fish pond, but to catch fish!

4. The messages from Hell are those often ignored by men today, for it is very unpopular to even speak of hell, yet it was a common theme of our Lord's in his time upon the earth. The reality of hell as Isaiah captures it is a powerful companion to the gospel message, for it is the reminder that all those who reject the Lord, whether they are the wealthy or those they stole their wealth from, will all end up together there, with great regret and the awful eternal realization that they got it 100% wrong.

All their wealth is nothing as they drop into hell and the first words they hear are the greetings of all the pagans who they stole from or killed, welcoming them to the common hell, where they can spend the years before the last judgment with those they abused, each abusing the other! We have a solemn obligation to remind the lost of what it truly means to be "lost", without Christ, without hope, and without eternal life! It is to join the ultimate "loser" – Satan himself.

5. It is a dangerous thing to start to believe your own publicity! Let us remember to keep our perspective on all things in this life in terms of the eternal realities we know from the Lord. Let us judge all things by his words and let his words permeate every aspect of our lives so that we see things his way, not according to the ways of men.

6. The plan of God is the PLAN OF GOD and it will be fulfilled, every "jot and tittle". We forget the nature and power of God at our peril, for we forget that he is Lord of all and King of all kings.

That is Satan's error and so we are free of its eternal judgment as believers, but we can fail to live in the Plan God's way, by not expressing faith in action through our obedient walk through space-time. Let us ensure we keep the correct view of the Mighty Creator God and the right attitude towards the details and anxieties of this life.

7. In the days of Ahaz there were promises given for the faithful remnant to cling to, but the rebellious attitudes of the majority of the people were hindering them from facing and living in the truth. Once he dies and a revival begins under Hezekiah the whole spiritual situation changes and the prophet once again can preach the Word with hope and confidence for the future and outline the prophetic future for the people. Positive volition expressed towards the Holy and dependable Word of God opens the door to further understanding of revelation and will renew our hope. As we allow the Holy Spirit to revive our spirits we will renew our hope and confidence in the Lord; let us move forward in faith and hope and love.

SUMMARY - SATAN'S "I WILLS…" HIS EVIL MENTAL ATTITUDE

As we begin to look at Satan's arrogant statements, let us recall the "I am Statements" of the Lord Jesus Christ, for they are secure forever, and we rest in their dependable truth for our lives here and forever. Satan was presumptive: the Lord was simply truthful.

CHRIST – I AM

The use of the " I AM" means that the Lord was saying that He is God. In **Exodus 3:14** God reveals Himself to Moses as, I AM THAT I AM. Using this phrase at His arrest in **John 18:2-6,** He caused the arresting army group to fall backwards due to His power as God flashing forth for a millisecond, before being led away as a willing sacrifice. We are not confronted with the Jesus of liberalism here, but with the Lord of lords, King of kings, God stepping down to speak authoritatively to mankind. There are seven significant "I AM's" in the Gospel of John that are a critical part of our understanding of the Angelic Conflict.

1. PROVISION - I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE - **John 6:30-35** - The feeding of the five thousand - a miracle involving bread. God provided miraculous physical food in the desert for forty years - Manna. Christ is our spiritual food. He says that he is the only source of spiritual food for you. There is life in no other. No one else can satisfy the spiritual hunger in man. He tells us He is the bread from heaven - He shows Himself as God. The bread of the Passover - unleavened, pierced and griddled; speaking of his body. Satan has no ability to stop the provision of God arriving for the believer in space-time at exactly the time and place it is required to do the work of Christ.

2. SPIRITUALITY - I AM THE LIGHT **John 8:12** - The feast of Tabernacles (where He also told the people to have the everlasting water **John 7:37-39**). When the Lord says this He is saying that He is the only source of pure light as shown in His matchless character. He is stating that He is God. **1 John 1** says that God is light and in Him is there no darkness at all. We are to walk in the light in fellowship with God and obedience to His Word as it applies into the fabric of our daily life. Satan hates the Word, and knows he cannot beat it when it is applied into daily life. This is why Jesus quotes Scripture at the temptations in Matthew 4 and Luke 4.

3. SALVATION - I AM THE DOOR **John 10:7** - The Sheepfolds of Jerusalem, **Psalms 22-24**. To be the door of the sheepfold, He is the only way into the plan of God. Anyone that tries to come any other way is a liar and a thief. If this is not true there is no way to God. Satan was powerless to oppose – for he couldn't close this door by killing the Lord before the Cross, as he was unable to do so – Jesus was simply obedient to the Father's Plan and so was protected every step. Satanic attack is only ever by permission of the Father, and Holy Spirit filled and obedient believers are always safe.

4. GUIDANCE - I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD **John 10:11** - the good shepherd, the only one who really cares. Many from other religions say that they really care but it is Jesus the good shepherd, who is the only one who really cares. All other systems drop you into hell, but he leads all who come to Him through to heaven.

5. RESURRECTION - I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE **John 11:20-25** - The death of Lazarus. Christ conquers death proving He is God, the resurrection and the life, He is the way the truth and life forever. The only way to blessed eternal life is in Christ Jesus. To reject Him is to have eternal life (infernal existence) in the Lake of Fire for you have joined Satan in his illogical and mindless rejection of God's grace, mercy and love. Such people have truly made the demonic choice!

6. TRUTH/LIFE - I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE **John 14: 6 -** There is no other way to gain meaning in this life and eternal life than through him. We are related to the King of kings and Lord of lords who came and died for us that we might live in Him forever. We should be obedient to our Lord who bought us with His blood. "I am the way the truth and the life". The only way to live is in the truth, the only way to have life and have it more abundantly is in Him. The only way to God is through the God man Jesus Christ. We need to live in intimate fellowship with Him as He is the only one who has the truth. Satan has the lies, but in Jesus we have truth.

It is intimate fellowship with Jesus and His Word that gives us security in the midst of the deceptions, distractions and distortions that Satan is constantly perpetrating upon gullible mankind.

7. PRODUCTION - I AM THE TRUE VINE **John 15:1-5** - Walking from the Passover meal past the Temple towards Gethsemane, He talks about the spiritual production that is ours in union with Him. I am the true vine - the only way to spiritual productivity is in Christ Jesus through the fruit of the Spirit. Love Joy Peace and the other fruit is only available in Christ. You have to be in the vine to have fruit. Many unbelievers want joy and peace but they cannot have it without close, passionate and obedient relationship with Christ. If you love Him you will love His Word. If you love and obey His Word you will be safe and secure in the midst of the Angelic Conflict.

Lets see the Satanic "alternatives" to the "I AM" statements of the Lord, and as we see them we will see that stark contrast between truth and lies. We also see in this summary of what we could call "satanic mind set", the mental attitude of all those who follow Satan and end up with him forever in the "Lake of Fire".

SATAN'S "I WILL" PATHETIC SELF-DECEIVING LYING STATEMENTS

1. "I will ascend to Heaven…" The mental attitude of each of these statement sis arrogance, but this is so foolish – how can a creature sit where the Creator sits? He dreams of ability and power he simply does not have. This is the same attitude of the unbeliever who rejects any divine enablement as being necessary. They are secure in their own plans and ideas, even though death stalks their every step and they have no control of ordinary things let alone eternal things!!!!

2. "I will exult my throne above the stars of God…" His desire for power is self defeating, for power without inner stability is going to fall. If God truly made the stars then there is no power that is equal to God and His Throne is to be honoured, for He is indeed "Lord of all". It is the rejection of the worship due to God that is at the heart of satanic pride and at the heart of fallen men and women.

3. "I will sit also upon the throne of the congregation in the sides of the north…" To set out to demand the worship of all other creatures, unless you are their creator is foolishness indeed. The Creator, whose desire is good and holy rightly demands appropriate response = worship. Another creature, no matter how powerful, has gained their power and ability purely from how they are made, and so they owe the "Maker" their all.

4. "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds…" The glory of the clouds is still felt by all who fly in aircraft today at 30,000 feet. We rightly rejoice in seeing and being thankful for something our ancestors desired to do for thousands of years, but we do not get distorted in our thinking to the point where we say this! He is indeed an illogical and pathetic creature….

5. "I will be like the most high…" In the heart of this arrogant statement is its weakness and fatal logical flaw. To be "like God" is not to be God! It is confusion to state such a thing, and it is confusion that Satan specializes in – forgetting he is a creature. At its heart satanic mental attitude is arrogance and stupidity, but it is culpable, for he has been made to think and he has deliberately left reason for it is inconvenient to him.

Chafer sums up these things well. "Satan's sin may thus be summarized as a purpose to secure (1) the highest heavenly position, (2) regal rights both in heaven and on the earth, (3) Messianic recognition, (4) glory which belongs to God alone, (5) a likeness to the most high, the possessor of heaven and earth". IBID, page 50.

Satan's strategy may be summarized in three desires that he "hooks" fellow arrogant and proud fools into believing are true and possible….

1. Take inappropriate power, with the mental attitude of arrogant assumption that you will "find the power" to achieve your goals. False positivity and false interpretation of ability is at the heart of this – distortion of thinking and self deception are the characteristics present.

2. Work without the atonement being mentioned – reject its necessity – just as Cain did. Power to live and enter eternity in blessing is through the work of God on our behalf – the atonement alone opens the door to eternity for fallen mankind.

3. Focus on people's approval – ignore God's revelation and opinions on anything. The majority vote has never been God's way, and it has never actually been even true. In the history of science the phrase, "most scientists agree" has always occurred before a falsehood is propagated – later to be proved false by a minority voice.

Let Christ be true and all other liars, for they tend to be so! This is the blunt affirmation of the Lord in the Angelic Conflict, for all other voices cannot be trusted at all. Hear Paul's challenge in the Prison Epistles.

Colossians 1:15-20, 2:14-15 *"15. (Christ) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:*
16. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:
17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.
18. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.
19. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;
20. And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

Jesus is the true Creator, Lord and King of all – why should, be pay any heed to the fake and the fraudster that Satan is. He claims all the dignity that applies to Jesus Christ our Lord, but Satan has neither the power nor the character to even be taken seriously, except by those willing to be deceived, because they don't want to worship and serve the Lord God! It is truly only those who hate God and despise the very thought of worshipping their Creator who are open to the satanic deception!

Colossians 2:6-15 *"6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:*
7. Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
9. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:
11. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.
13. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
14. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;
15. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

If we reflect for even a few prayerful minutes on what Jesus has done and who He really is we can find our soul resting in His perfect Person and Work on our behalf. We need also at times to reflect upon who Satan is and what he has consistently done since his fall and be secure in our assessment of his malice and lies. He is judged. **John 12:31, 16:11-18, Hebrews 2:14**. Faith in the Real King, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the "faith-rest life" that we are called to walk within, and if we rest in His perfect Person and Completed Work we are safe, secure and blessed forever.

Satan would not ever release his prisoners, but Jesus has come and proclaimed the liberty that is freely available through his completed work to defeat Satan. **Isaiah 14:17, 61:1-3, Luke 4:16-21**. The Lord Jesus Christ rules – let us confront the world with the truth and expose Satan's lying deceptions at every opportunity!

Isaiah 61:1-3 *"1. The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;*
2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

Luke 4:16-21 *"16. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*
17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
20. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.
21. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

SATAN'S JUDGMENT UNFOLDS

Phase 1. He is finally cast out of heaven – he no longer has any access to God to complain or accuse believers. It is the prelude to final judgment, but does not induce fear within him, but increased malice, as unfolds in the following chapters of Revelation.

Revelation 12:7-12 *"7. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,*
8. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
10. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
12. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Phase 2. Capture and imprisonment for 1000 years at the Lord's Second Advent to deal with his penultimate attempt to destroy mankind and especially the Jewish people before the Lord can return. **Isaiah 24:21-23** also.

Revelation 20:1-3 *"1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*
2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,
3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Phase 3. His final judgment after he has been "used" by the Lord to sift the volition of the people who have lived with perfect environment for the Millennial Kingdom. This last generation of mankind within the present universe have grown up without any rebellion at all, and so must have the opportunity to select Satan rather than God for eternity, and vast multitudes do!

Revelation 20:7-10 *"7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*
8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.
10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

SATAN'S EVIL AND TOTALLY ILLOGICAL CHARACTER

It will always be baffling to saved people as to why the unbelievers follow Satan into such illogicality as thinking they can defeat their Maker. Satan is characterized by the irrational rejection of the reality of God's values based creation. It is his deliberate selection of untruth to reality that will always baffle us! Deception is at the core of satanic thinking, and as has been noted many times in our study, when you are deceived by your own arrogance, you are self-deceived!

Pride creates cognitive distortion, where in arrogant self deception the thinking becomes tunnel visioned and the full nature of the reality of the present Creation and the fullness of the holy Character of God is not see clearly, and what is seen is distorted.

Pride and arrogance create tension within a created logical mind and that inner emotional tension distorts all that is seen and thought afterwards. We get a glimpse of this fact with studies on the Stress reaction, for as we pump more and more stress hormones we experience short term memory failure, visual and auditory tunnel vision and distortion, we start seeing things wrongly, and imagination becomes as real as visual sight! Our mind unhinges totally when stress becomes too great and the individual becomes "psychotic" (their soul/psuche breaks into pieces).

Malice is the first fruit of arrogance, for hatred of what opposes illogicality is the nature result of pride. The pride filled liar must hate and try to destroy the person telling them the truth, for they cannot stand it, nor will they accept it! We have the saying, "Don't confuse me with the facts, for my mind is made up". It may be a good statement to sum up the satanic mental attitude. No greater fool exists than the fool who has accepted his/her own marketing message; that they are not fools but wise! A person who cannot be corrected is simply an oxygen thief waiting for a disaster to sweep their presumption and stupidity away.

While sin enters through "one man", **Romans 5:12**, it enters because some will not accept their nature as creatures and desire to be more, but without the humility and worship that opens the door to eternal greatness and blessedness. There is great glory for us only through the "door" that Christ opens. Satan provides a false door and it leads to death and eternal separation from hope, love and joy forever!

Satan's viewpoint is actually a form of culpable insanity – he rejects His Creator! Hear Dr L S Chafer again, "There is little wonder that misery bulks so large in the world when it is recognized that almost every human life is lived without any conscious reliance upon God. What anguish independence has inflicted on fallen angels is not fully revealed. Their destiny, like that of fallen unregenerate humanity, is but a normal consummation of their normal career." IBID page 67.

The "lie" that Satan believes and that he perpetrates upon the deceived members of the human race he has fooled is at its core the amplification of "human rights" without "human responsibilities". Without any creation, or any divine plan that gives human dignity, there is no logical reason for "human rights", for these people hold to the "theory of evolutionary processes", that means the "survival of the fitness", not the protection of the stupid! There are no "human rights" in evolutionary processes – just battles for survival. There is thorough self-contradiction at the heart of all satanic viewpoints, for they begin in self-deception and build lies upon that dodgy foundation.

Satan doesn't want to accept culpability, responsibility or accountability and fools fallen mankind into thinking that "it will be alright" – God isn't moral – he is "all Love" – and so will forgive us all and we will all be in heaven in the end. Satan doesn't want people to think that Evil is too bad after all, for its just an expression of free will and man's legitimate freedom – its heroic and God will admire Satan's heroics! Actually there is no heroics with a soldier who doesn't realize how unprepared for battle they are – such a soldier is just a fantasist and fool. Such is satanic self deception; it creates illogicality and destruction, for Satan and all his followers think they are more powerful than they are.

Pause and reflect – for the fruit of his "heroic opposition to God is seen writ large in Hitler and many many others…. Can there be forgiveness for such deliberate evil choices to exploit, abuse, and destroy others!

Those of Satan's team who speak most about individual freedom are the ones who are fastest to abuse the freedom of all who oppose them! This is why, "Peace activist" groups are the most violent, and "animal rights campaigners" think nothing about killing human beings, and climate activists set fires to destroy those who they blame for lighting fires….. Sit with the illogicality of the satanic viewpoint. By their fruit you will know them. **Matthew 7:13-23.** Even though we have read **Psalm 2** before, I do not believe you can read it too many times, for it is God's answer to Satan's arrogant stupidity.

Psalm 2:1-12 *"1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?.*
2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,
3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
4. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.
6. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.
7. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.
8. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.
9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
10. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

God's Indictments against Satan. (Refer L S Chafer, IBID pages 73-74)

1. He repudiated worship of the Lord from the beginning. **Isaiah 14:12-14**
2. He led 1/3rd of the angels with him. **Revelation 12:4**
3. He sinned form the beginning. **1 John 3:8**
4. He was a liar from the beginning. **John 8:44**
5. He belittled God's words in the Garden. **Genesis 3:1-5**
6. He insulted Job's love for God and God's worthiness to be loved. **Job 1:9**
7. He maliciously assaulted Job in 5 ways as soon as he could. Job **1:13-2:7**
8. He stood against Israel, **1 Chronicles 21:1, Psalm 109:6, Zechariah 3:1-2.**
9. He weakens the nations. **Isaiah 14:12**
10. He made the earth to tremble. **Isaiah 14:16**
11. He shook kingdoms. **Isaiah 14:16**
12. He makes the world a wilderness. **Isaiah 14:17**
13. He destroys cities. **Isaiah 14:17**
14. He does not release his prisoners. **Isaiah 14:17**
15. He causes war whenever he can. **Revelation 20:2, 7-8**
16. He tempted the Lord by attacking the Eternal Plan. **Matthew 4, Luke 4.**
17. He bound a woman for 18 years. **Luke 13:16**
18. He indwelt Judas and hardened him in rebellion. **John 13:2**
19. He blinds the minds of the lost. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**
20. He takes the Word out of the heart of the lost. **Luke 8:12**
21. He lays snares for the unwary saint. **Ephesians 6:11, 2 Timothy 2:26**
22. He executes any he is able to. **Hebrews 2:14, Revelation 1:18**
23. He is like a lion seeking to tear apart the unwary. **1 Peter 5:8**
24. He is the father of all liars and rebels against God. **John 4:44-51**.

Notes

JOHN'S "LAST WORDS" REALLY EMPHASIZE THE DANGERS OF EVIL

In Revelation, the Gospel and the First Letter of John, the last Apostle gives "last words" to warn the churches about the dangers in their walk through the world. John understands as he moves towards the end of his ministry and life that he must warn the Lord's people even more about the danger of Satan's "Cosmos System" of false doctrines. He sees that falsehoods are Satan's tool to distract people, distort the truth and deceive the unwary from God's path for their lives. The Revelation received on Patmos has underlined these things. These books are your "study plan" to follow up this book. To win in the "Angelic Conflict" we must all follow the "last words of the Apostles".

Demas leaves Paul in jail to die, because he "loved this present world" more than he loved and apostle and the Lord. **2 Timothy 4:10**. He may have recovered later, but what a legacy to leave about yourself to the Christian world, that you valued your own temporary earthly life above your service to the apostle, and so were no longer ready to die with him and enter glory. It is the right perspective to this life that John draws attention to in his "last words". The last books written by each apostle gives us our "final orders" as we battle the "cosmos system" of the enemy.

Of the 186 uses of the word "cosmos/world", wherever there is a moral observation being made, the meaning is of the world as organized against the Creator – Satan's world control system. It is the way the authors of scripture indicate the satanic belief system that holds together the pagan power structure of politics and society generally. The "Cosmos System" is a short hand way of referring to all Satan's values and strategy, in order to keep people distracted, the truth about eternal consequences of actions distorted, and people deceived about what really matters on their brief walk through space-time.

"Worldliness" is the other word used, and it is the opposite of spirituality, and is another way the human authors of scripture emphasized the "two paths" in this life that Jesus taught so clearly, **Matthew 7:13-23**. We walk here on earth with God's priorities and God's values, or we are deceived and walk with Satan and share his false values and, if we are a carnal believer as a result, we lose eternal rewards. For the unbeliever who is deceived, they lose everything, and spend eternity in the Lake of Fire with Satan and his demons, who they valued above God! Let us see John's warnings in his last Letter, 1 John Chapter 2 below.

1 John 2:15ff.

In this last of John's written works, literally his "last words" to the Church, John makes it clear to all that spiritual advance (or maturity) in the Christian life depends upon obedience to the revealed will of God through his Holy Word being applied into the heart, mind and body by means of the ministries of the Holy Spirit. This section of the Letter acts as a Commentary upon **John 15:1-17**, and **John 17:14-19**.

[a] We must walk in the light of His Word.

[b] We must respond to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in our life

[c] We must confess our sins and walk in love for our brethren

[d] We must go beyond obedience to God's commands and respond to the Lord's desires for us.

This spiritual path lived out daily, (**James 2:9-26)** will lead to a growth of understanding of the character and plan of the Lord, and will develop within each of us a deeper and deeper love for the Lord that will overflow to his people also. To know Him more is to love Him more and desire His will for your life. His will is that we love the brethren and reach the lost with his message of forgiveness. **John 15:1-17.** The alternative to spiritual growth is the slow operation of the "sin unto death" of carnality; whereby sin gets more and more a hold over the life, and the believer slips steadily away from the path of life and blessing into the path of the sin unto death. Refer to the BTB study below of SPIRITUALITY/CARNALITY.

Verse 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

This verse introduces another factor and it is the rejection of Satan's system, or way of doing things. As you grow as a Christian you should be able to discern more and more of Satan's system and his tactics to thwart believer's growth. The sooner you can get smart about Satan the better.

We must not be 'ignorant' of his devices. **2 Corinthians 2:11**. This section comments upon the Lord's Prayer for us in **John 17:14-19**. We are challenged here to reflect upon our love/attachment to the things of this world.

The word for 'world' in the Bible is the Greek word, "kosmos/cosmos". This does not mean the beautiful world with its created scenery. Kosmos refers to a world system of government, which is organized in rebellion against God. Kosmos is the word used by the New Testament writers to refer to, mankind organized by Satan against God; it is the word for "politically organized evil" as the philosophy that underpins Satan's strategy to distract man from the need for salvation, distort all thinking that might lead to salvation, and deceive mankind about eternal values. Remember Satan's words to Jesus, as recorded in Matthew and Luke Chapter 4. Satan has control of most human political machines of each State, and we need God's power and to be following God's Plan to walk safely through this world.

This reality is reflected where politics is about holding power, and business is about seizing all the money that can be seized, irrespective of its sustainability and impact on others or the environment. It is the preoccupation with the lusts that is at the heart of "kosmos thinking", and even the social fabric of a society can be involved in this evil, because Satan is involved. The driving force of Satan's people and system is lust; lust for power, money, prestige, position, material goods, toys, approbation or sexual lust. This is the motivating force behind the "kosmos" system. This produces what the Bible defines as evil. Evil is defined as Satan's policy of control/power in opposition to God's policy of Grace/Eternal Glory. Refer to the BTB studies, WORLD, WORLDLINESS below.

Satan is able to organize things to his benefit by using the old sin nature (OSN) of man. In our life we will have to decide daily what we are going to do within the business, social and political systems, as they exist in our country. Do we get involved with the power structures or not? We should always support those things that are standing for truth, godliness and righteousness, but each person must seek the Lord's leading as to their part in the eternal plan. It is difficult to say how close you can get to any political system without becoming tainted yourself by the evil of those involved. Remember Jesus does not challenge Satan's assertion that he controls all the world's rulers at this time. **Matthew 4:8-11**.

Notice that the kingdoms and their "glory" were Satan's to offer, and they probably still are! The answer for each believer, as to what they are safe to do in this world is going to be very individual, and we are called to heed the Holy Spirit's leading, and that will always lead us into places where we can stand for truth without compromise. Refer to the BTB study, SIN – OLD SIN NATURE, and FRUITS OF THE OLD SIN NATURE below. Satan has his demon "princes" assigned to every nation, but we remember **1 John 4:4** and "remain calm and carry on" doing the work the Lord as the Holy Spirit directs us to do.

If you are involved with a political system be involved for a spiritual reason and be very sure of the Holy Spirit's leading you there, and only be involved as you are led, leaving when the Spirit guides you to leave. Do not love the system because the system is basically evil; with men and women involved in power for their own sinful and lust filled, and power dominated reasons. You are not going to put a good apple into a barrel of rotten apples and cause the rotten apples to become good. The bad apples will always make the good apple bad! There is a dangerous myth about, that it is possible to change the Devil's Cosmos world by social action; it is false, it cannot be done with any godly results flowing from it. Our job is to guide people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be part of the Lord saving them out of the fire. **Jude 20-23**.

Even with the best intentions it is easy for believers to forget that the motivation and philosophy behind many of our political and social institutions is evil. You are not to get involved with loving any system of man, because it can wound your love for Christ. You are an ambassador and witness in the devil's cosmos/world. Do not forget it is still the devil's political world. Satan is the usurping "Prince of this world", defeated but still presently in political control by his deception, distortion and distraction techniques, but the Lord's Second Advent will see this usurper arrested, and the Lord making himself king of this world fully and finally. **John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11.** Refer below to the BTB study CHRISTIAN LIFE – AMBASSADORSHIP, CHRIST – SECOND ADVENT.

Many liberals, who have accepted Amillennialism, get involved in social action to bring in, what they call, the kingdom of God on earth, as they do not believe that Christ will come back to establish the Millennium. The result of social action is however nearly always greater evil. Study Church History and see this writ large! If you change the Devil's world into a nicer place, you have simply made it a nicer place from which the unbeliever still goes to hell. God wants us focused solely upon eternal realities, and seeing the things of space-time in terms of eternal consequences for temporal actions (both our own and the unbelievers). This is the issue in the "Angelic Conflict"; we must get our "orders" right and be obedient to the real issues.

We are not to love money, (**James 1:9-11**), nor anything else associated with this present world. **2 Peter 3:10-13** states that this world will disappear; all we see is temporary, and must be seen as such. The Lord looked over Jerusalem and wept because He knew what was to happen in 70 AD. We have no continuing city here! **Hebrews 13:14**. We should not concentrate our attention or interest upon physical things such as land, big storehouses, palatial houses, businesses and great buildings, but rather on spiritual things. **Luke 12:16-21**, **16:19-23**. We must look past the scenery, the buildings, vehicles and the institutions of society and concentrate on the Lord, and his will, to save the lost, in the midst of this evil world.

Luke 12:16-21 *“16. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:*
17. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?
18. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.
19. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.
20. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
21. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

Luke 16:19-31 *“19. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:*
20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,
21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.
22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
24. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.
25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.
26. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.
27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:
28. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.
29. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.
30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.
31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

'Cosmos Society' is simply a large number of people in rebellion against God, sinners needing salvation, sinners organized in rejection of their Saviour. This sort of viewpoint upon the present world will then allow you to be correctly involved in the things of the world. We must be thoughtful, prayerful and hesitant in matters of our inter-face with the world and it’s systems. For many in today’s world, patriotism is intertwined with our faith. The national flag is in the church, in a prominent place at the front of the main auditorium, and even politics is preached from the pulpit. This present practice is a legacy of the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe, and the wars for national independence in the centuries following. The flags of the nations have been brought into the church since these days.

This was not the case in first three centuries of the early church. The early believers would never have thought of having a Roman Eagle in their services, for all the banners of the nations and armies in John’s day were associated with pagan deities. It was easy for believers of John’s day to exclude all that was associated with nationalism, for it was intertwined with paganism.

In many nations today that is, on the surface at least, no longer the case, but the paganism is still there; it is just more subtle and runs deeper, and is beneath a surface/appearance that has been modified by several hundred years of Christendom. This process of the satanic “cosmos system” going underground actually begins with the Roman Emperor Constantine in the fourth century, who brings a Christianized political and military system into the Empire, and parades in the great basilicas the new banners of his legions, now with Christian symbols upon them, but the paganism still at their core.

Follow up this study with a deeper study of the many Church History books on the EBCWA CD or USB, and it will reveal that the impact of such mixing of politics and faith led to a dilution of both church and state! Within a hundred years the Empire had gone, except for a rump in the east, and the church had lost its evangelistic fire, and it's commitment for truth. If we wanted a motto for the re-application of the separation of Church and State it would be, "remember Constantine". This is a major debate in the field of Systematic Theology. Refer to the full EBCWA Diploma Course for the systematic teaching of all the doctrines that surround this subject.

Now I want to be clear on this point, lest I be misquoted. It is not wrong to love your country for all that you have been free to do there, and as the place of your birth, family, and friendships, but you must love the Lord first and above all else. You should then have a good attitude to your involvement in things of the State, because of your faith, and eternal life perspective. I repeat the point above that any involvement in politics must be decided upon by individual prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit alone! We all must walk our own God assigned and called path through this life, and if it involves politics you need a good company of prayer warriors to support you, for it is a dangerous path.

In **2 Peter 3:9ff** Peter says that all things are going to be destroyed, totally destroyed. A fisherman may love his fishing spot but what he is ultimately there for is the fish. If the fish disappear he will lose his love for the spot. We are fishers of men. **Matthew 4:19**; we are here to fish for souls not clean up or worship the fishpond. Refer below to the BTB doctrinal study on NATIONS AND RACES, DESTINY OF NATIONS, NEBUCHADNEZZAR – PRIDE, and NIMROD – INTERNATIONALISM.

In verse 15, John says, "stop the habit of loving the world" (present, active, imperative of agapao). This indicates that the believers are as a daily habit, 'loving' the system that is this "kosmos-world" and they must stop or they will lose their perspective on the task the Lord has for them to do here.

How many of us are still, to all extents and purposes, loving our world? How many of us are loving, or better, devoting our time to, the acquisition of money, power, influence and approbation? The way we see reality, if we are ruled by "love of this present world", is by assessing how much time we devote to these things, and how strongly we are influenced by the mental attitude associated with acquiring these things.

We can love the beauty of nature and praise God for it but we must beware that we do not get seduced by the material things and institutions of the world, and the "rewards" they provide here and now. This present world provides instant blessing now, in money, sex, power, influence and fame. Many chase these things, and Satan ensures they get them! Believer, what does God want for you? Heed Jeremiah's words to his servant Baruch. For the sake of your role in the angelic conflict win the battle against the desire for the things that this "cosmos" system can give!

Jeremiah 45:1ff *"1. The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,*
2. Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch:
3. Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest. (He is desiring a happier, more relaxed life in the Cosmos)
4. Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. (Don't see the physical/material things around you as worth having, for they will all be swept away).
5. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest."

If we follow after and seek these material things, and are "ruled by our lust" for them, then we will become more and more self centred, more and more a victim of our own pride-centred thinking. The result of pride is that we open ourselves to be ensnared by the enemy, and the result will be we will fall for the flattery of this world, and be side-tracked from our ambassadorship. **2 Timothy 2:4, James 4:4, 2 Peter 2:20**. This was the sin of Demas in the end and he leaves the pages of scripture in disgrace. **2 Timothy 4:9**.

If you are seduced into loving this temporary world/cosmos system and what it can give you (power, money, praise, status, sex, position), then you have lost your "first love" for the Lord. **Revelation 2:2-5**. The Lord Jesus, and the apostles, make it absolutely clear that you cannot serve God and the Cosmos/kosmos/world system! We cannot serve God and Mammon (just another word Jesus uses for the satanic viewpoint/cosmos system)! **Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:13**.

It is no accident that the Lord moves on here to talk about the dangers of false teachers right after his comments on finding the “narrow way” that leads to eternal life, and turning away from the “broad way”, that most follow, that leads to all Satan can give you in this present world. **Matthew 7:13-14, 15-25**.

Many people follow after the “things of this world”, but all such success and prosperity is “built on sand”, a temporary success on a temporary planet, and the Lord’s picture of judgment is powerful in verse twenty seven of Matthew Seven. This is how many of us lived as adult unbelievers before meeting the Lord. That fact alone should indicate that such an attitude is of the enemy, not of God. “Worldliness” is the enemy of truth, morality, and evangelism. Anything that makes us look like unbelievers is to be avoided like the plague! **Ephesians 2:1-10, Colossians 3:1-13**. These two passages from Paul are good reflections upon this subject for any small group you are leading in a discussion on this matter. Note how the subject of the “Angelic Conflict” is central to nearly all discussions of Christian living in light of the “latter days”!

Verses *16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*.

Worldliness is lust based, and founded on the Old Sin Nature’s desires to satisfy carnal/fleshly/bodily desires. This is the definition of “Lust”. These two verses build on the principles of the previous verses, by introducing the trinity of Satan; the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. This is not of the Father, for God has nothing to do with these things, but is of the Cosmos/world. These three are the fruit of the Old Sin Nature, as Love, Joy and Peace are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. **Galatians 5:15-26**. Note the contrast Paul describes between the two separate groups of “fruit”, for as Jesus told us in Matthew 7, there are only two paths through this life – God’s Narrow-path that leads to worship, witness and work of eternal significance, and Satan’s “broad way” that leads to destruction!

The world is in the process of passing away and the lusts that are part of its temporary nature will pass away with it. We are challenged to make our choice. We are called to choose God and his way, over Satan and his way; we are called to live for things that last eternally, rather than the things that are as temporary as this world cosmos system is. We are not to love the world, as believers, because it is controlled by Satan, and run by lust, and as such is not compatible with God. God calls us to be “run by” the motivating power of agape love, not the self centred power of Old Sin Nature desire for personal gratification. The challenge is an absolute one with eternal consequences.

Philippians 3:13-21. *“13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*
14. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
15. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
16. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.
17. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
18. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
19. Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)
20. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:
21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

In both John's time, and earlier in the days of James, Peter and Paul, we see a situation where a church has become dominated by lust based thinking, and sinful actions flowing from this satanic mental attitude. Sadly, the OSN (Old Sin Nature) of man has not changed, and churches today face the same reality of people doing things to satisfy their lusts rather than fulfil the will of God for them. The particular lust of the flesh could be sexual, gluttony, drinking, power, approval, or simply having the modern philosophy of, "if it feels good do it". Refer to the study on SIN – OLD SIN NATURE, FRUITS OF THE OLD SIN NATURE below.

The lusts from the OSN are evil and satanic but they are the motive force behind much of our society’s institutions. The basis of advertising is, for example, to cultivate the lusts of the flesh. Let us look closely at this satanic trinity for it’s values and desires are at the heart of all society’s power structure. John’s desire in his “last words” is for us to see this clearly and avoid it thoroughly. This is Satan’s “worldly cosmos trinity”.

1. The Lust of the Flesh. The Greek word for lust is epithumia. It is used to refer to overwhelming desire. John identifies that it is a desire based in the body (the flesh), but it overwhelms the reason at times. There is, for most, a daily battle against passionate desires for things to make us 'feel good'. These desires come like waves, and must be met or we will do things that will make our witness shipwrecked. **Numbers 11:4, 33-35, 2 Peter 2:9-17.**

Such powerful emotions can only be met by equally powerful spiritual forces. Only when our spirit is saturated in God's Word and we are in moment by moment fellowship with the Holy Spirit, can we withstand such 'temptation waves' from the OSN. **Mark 4:19, Galatians 5:17.**

2. The lust of the eyes is envy and jealousy. We can become blinded to spiritual truths by being so involved in sin and evil that lust is all we see. Preoccupation with self-centred pleasure or gratification means that all we 'see' as we move through each day, is the temptation to further evil, and we are seduced into destructive paths, not seeing their dangers.

Turn to **John 12:37 - 40**. If Satan can get a person so blinded to the truth that they do not see the Lord, nor his word, and will for them, he has won a great victory over that person. Also look at **2 Corinthians 3:12-18**. The Holy Spirit takes the veil [blindness) away, so we can see again. Look also at **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**. If we are blinded by our sins, we are like the people of this present world, perishing! John urges us in his letter to be obedient to the Holy Spirit and so avoid the fate of the world.

3. The pride of life is the Greek word, "alazon", which means the boastful pride of a person who thinks they are like a god. It is an, 'I am the king of the castle', type of pride. If you do not worship God in the end you are going to worship yourself and your own “success”! If a believer gets into a system that is based on pride they are in danger of worshipping at the shrine of self-absorption, and that is Satan’s shrine! Beware any system of works or rewards in this life that appeals to pride. Each of the three “prides” is answered by the three fold message of this Letter. God is LIGHT to show the reality of all flesh, God is LOVE not lust, and God is LIFE; not delusion that comes from blindness, lust and pride!

Within the churches such things existed in John’s day, and without vigilance on these matters these lust patterns of thinking can keep on existing in our own day! Churches that run their programs on any point scoring system, or public applause each week for the 'best' teacher, or evangelist, or worker, are in danger of this. Pride based rewards for service appeal to the Old Sin Nature and develop its strength. We are called to “walk in the Spirit” and not meet the “lusts of the flesh”.

You cannot be a true ambassador for Christ and be involved with any system that gives you pride based 'rewards' here in this world. To be an ambassador for the Lord means, we are focused on heaven and the rewards the Lord will give; anything else is of no consequence! Any system that appeals to pride to encourage service for the Lord is out of the Lord's will. Believer’s service is to be motivated by heavenly reward only, and the Lord's 'well done' rather than Man’s.

Look at **Matthew 25:21-23**. Note the psalmist’s prayer in **Psalms 119:33-40**. This is the prayer to be delivered from the, “lust of the eyes, and the pride of this life”.

Note closely again John's observation at the end of verse sixteen. Anything that appeals to pride or lust is not of the Father. God will have nothing to do with man's pride or man's lust. Our service and obedience to God must be motivated by love for God, or it is not an acceptable offering. What is well-pleasing to God is the service of a believer motivated by love. Refer to **Philippians 4:17-20, Hebrews 13:20-21**.

Verse 17 ***And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever***.

This portrays the difference between those who follow the worldly Cosmos system and those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. He who does the will of God abides forever but everything that Satan does, and all he and his deceived followers value will pass away. What sort of people should we be, having truly known this? Surely we should put our emphasis in what is going to last. Calvin said, "I would sooner lose now and win later than win the praise of man now and lose eternal rewards forever". The psalmist grapples with this issue, for he sees that Satan does truly reward his people with all they lust for. **Psalms 73:1-28**. Also refer to **Isaiah 40:6-8, Matthew 6:28-34, 24:35**.

Don't ever doubt that Satan provides temporary rewards for his people, for he does, but they do not last, and always his hatred of mankind overwhelms his rewards system and he ensures his people die badly. Ask yourself, how do you spend your time?

How much time is spent in “lust type” activity, to simply meet your own desires, with no real reference to the plan of God for your life path? You should pray to the Lord to protect you from the seduction of the world system of Satan today, for it saturates our advertising and media.

Our daily prayer should be ever, “Lord, keep me back from concentrating on things that do not matter, and let me spend my time on preparation for, or actual service for you, for that alone will reap reward eternally”. We alone, in the midst of the temporary things of life, we alone who do the will of the Lord, will live forever with Him. Surely this is a purifying hope! **John 17:8-19, 1 John 3:3**.

Read slowly through, **2 Peter 3:8-14.** *“8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*
9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.
14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

The contrast between the “two paths” through this life is a stark one. Those who keep on doing the things associated with the lust of this world will perish with it! Those who keep on abiding in the love of God, and fellowshipping with the Lord Jesus Christ, keeping themselves safe from temptation, will live eternally with the one they have chosen above this world! This is the heart of the choice here; love of the Lord being greater than love of this world and all it has to offer. God will not share us with another! We cannot love Him and the world without being spiritual adulterers!

Verse *18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

Here we have the third reason why we should be following these instructions. John is strongly pointing out to us that the time is short, Satan is active, the Antichrist is coming, but there are many antichrists already, John says. John's point is that the battle for mankind's souls is hot around him, and will steadily get hotter as the age draws to it’s certain end.

Remember, from a prophecy viewpoint, it has been the 'last days' since the resurrection/Pentecost. The church exists in the period which is called the “Church Age” or the “Age of Grace”, but may also be called “the last days”. The last days started at the time of the Cross, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost.

We have been living in the last days as long as the Church has existed; for over 1900 years so far, and should live as if every minute was critical and potentially the last one. Irrespective of how long we might have, we should consider every day our last. This urgency is something we can forget in the heady days of a new century, over 2000 years since the Lord's birth, but the message of the scriptures is, “be active and be focused on your task”.

There are many people who are trying to replace or oppose Jesus Christ in our day, as there have been throughout the whole period of church history. Was John wrong when he said it was the 'last hour'? The answer is a strong, "NO", for his desire, with the Lord's was that we live every day as if it was the last one we were to have on earth. The church age is referred to by some as the intensified stage of the angelic conflict, and so it is. The message of Paul, and Peter also, was the same, see every hour as if it is your last and redeem each and every day, transforming time into opportunity for the completion of the Lord’s work upon the earth! **Ephesians 5:16, 1 Timothy 4:1-11, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 1 Peter 1:5, 20, 2 Peter 3:1-4.** Refer to BTB study of TIME below.

It is the last period of history before the Lord’s return. This period began at the Cross/Resurrection, or the day of Pentecost; there would be some that would argue for either, but I tend to group these as a single long “event” that changes the character of the Age, from Israel to the Church.

This new period has run now for nearly two thousand years. If we compare this age to others we see that this has not been the longest to date, with the period Adam to Abraham being approximately 2100 years, the Patriarchal period being approximately 450 years, the period of the Mosaic Law being approximately 1550 years, giving a joint Age of Israel of around 2000 years also, and then our own period. The last period before the world is remade is exactly 1000 years, hence it's name, the Millennial Kingdom. We are therefore, in the church age, in the last days of the angelic conflict, before the Lord's return, and that is John's point here. Refer below to the BTB doctrinal study of PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS.

Satan's time clock is ticking now, for over two thirds of his time to deceive man is over, and he knows it. The next prophetic event awaited is a negative one; it is the invasion of the Middle East described in Ezekiel 38-39, as the scene setter for the later coming of the Anti-Christ. Satan is working hard, as he knows that this age is going to end with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and so Satan's plan is to launch his alternative Saviour just before he believes the Lord's return is near. He still arrogantly believes that he can win, destroy all believers and rob the Lord of victory!

No-one knows exactly when the Lord is due, but the signs of his coming are well presented in the Scriptures and Satan is a student of the Bible, even though most believers are not. He is ready and is working very hard to try to destroy the church and then Israel through his last years of activity. The major thrust of his attack is using fake spirituality and false teachers to spread confusion amongst God's people, and ensure that unbelievers are kept in the dark thoroughly. John will spend many verses later in the letter ensuring the believers of his day and our own, know even more ways as to how to spot the phony teacher quickly. Refer to the BTB studies below on CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD, ANTI-CHRIST – WORLD RULER, CHRIST TYPES - ANTICHRIST AND CHRIST CONTRASTED.

Verse *19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us*.

John describes some of the "pee-wee antichrists" of his day. He says that, "they went out from us but were not of us". Some of Satan's most useful troops, in John's day, had been church members and his most dangerous troops today still are ex-church members; some are members of liberal churches that do not believe the Bible, but others are Pentecostals, who is false fervour add to the bible their own cosmos lies, and so set up new and dangerous cults. We are involved in a guerrilla war, and ambush is Satan's desired attack tactic. Judas sat at the "Last Supper" table as a traitor, and many still do.

None of the disciples saw Judas as a fake. John was on the right hand side of the Lord whilst Judas was on the left at the Last Supper with only John hearing what Jesus said to Judas, and even John was shocked to discover later he was the traitor. Satan has been devious in his recruitment program since the beginning, and he seeks those who have been close to the centre of the Lord's work as his key operatives. **Deuteronomy 13:13, Psalms 41:9, John 13:18, 2 Peter 2:10-22.**

When Judas went out with the others on a preaching tour through the three years of ministry with the Lord, he preached the gospel and was not seen as a phony. If you are to be a pastor of a church you have to be discerning, for not all who say, "praise the Lord", and even cast out demons, are in fact genuine. **Matthew 7:21-22**. The more "holy" the language - often the more fake and evil is the heart.

No pastor who is doing something for the Lord will be without satanic opposition from the inside, as well as from the enemy outside. Do not get upset when it happens, as betrayal is the enemy's tactic. Satanic opposition is to be seen as a compliment, for it means you are dangerous to the enemy. So when attacked, rejoice in the opposition, for it means you are effective. John identifies the times, however, where we find it hard to rejoice in the opposition, and it is when the enemy is a person we looked upon as an old friend.

John says that had they been true believers they would have stayed with us. We, like John, believe in the eternal security of the believer and in the eternal condemnation of the unbeliever, and the make believer. We must maintain our vigilance in the matter of "fruit inspecting" of all church leadership, and be very discerning about the people we are dealing with within the churches in positions where they might influence others.

You as a pastor need to deal with the "make believers" before they rip apart the Lord's sheep. See things as God sees them and react as He would. Remember Matthew 7:13-23, and do not shrink from condemnation of the fake Christian, for they will show no mercy to the Lord's little lambs, or his elderly sheep.

APPLICATION FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY

1. We cannot love God and equally love the things of this present Cosmos satanic world system of power and lust. God demands our love and obedience, and he will not share us with another. To love the wrong things is to lose perspective on what matters and what doesn't.

2. Lust is the opposite of agape love. Lust seeks to take, whereas love seeks opportunity to give to assist/empower others. We are called to love others and fight the temptation to abuse and use people to meet our lusts. Let us remain focused on loving and serving others, rather than meeting our own selfish lusts.

3. Anti-Christ is coming to world power one day, but before he arrives there are many "pee-wee anti-Christ" figures, each standing for Satan's Cosmos policy against God. These will be people who have experience in church, but have rejected all we stand for and seek only to serve their own lusts, and lead people away from the truth of the Gospel message. Let us focus our energy on preaching the truth and standing against all wolves in sheep skins who would distract the lambs from the path of life, and make merchandise of them.

4. "By their fruit you will know them"! Let us keep doing our fruit inspecting and ensure that no-one holds any position in a church who does not pass the fruit test. We cannot allow any wolves into the flock by our slack vigilance in this matter! Let us be alert, for we know the enemy's plans and he seeks to send his own into the church to deceive and destroy from within.

CHRISTIAN LIFE: AMBASSADORSHIP

(WE ARE GOD'S PEOPLE – STANDING FOR GOD'S VIEWPOINT IN SATAN'S COSMOS)

1. An Ambassador does not appoint them self, they are appointed by the nation they represent, the king they represent, the person they represent. We are appointed by God. (**2 Corinthians 5:20)**.

2. An Ambassador does not support themself. We are sustained and protected by God (**Philippians 4:19**).

3. An Ambassador does not represent themself. We represent God on earth. (**Matthew 28:19-20**).

4. An Ambassador does not belong to the nation to which they are sent. Positionally we are in heaven, but now experientially we are in the world. (**Philippians 3:20, John 15:19**).

5. All Ambassadors have instructions in written form. We have the Word of God. (**1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**).

6. An Ambassador representing their nation does not treat any insult as personal. (**Matthew 5:11-12**).

7. When an Ambassador is recalled from a country it is tantamount to declaration of war. After the Rapture there will be massive warfare on earth. All Christians will be recalled at the Rapture. (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**).

God's Plan calls for faith to be expressed through Grace offered and received by each person individually. Satanic viewpoint calls for philosophical, religious, or entertainment activity; actually anything other than genuine faith and worship in the One True God! God has acted to bring salvation into the very heart of the satanic cosmos system through "Immanuel", who comes, and dies for all. **1 John 2:1-2**. The challenge to all within the cosmos system is to look at the one who came to die for them. To take the Saviour seriously is God's demand of each person. To sin against God is ultimate insanity, for you reject reason itself! To move beyond that point is to live in self deception, and death ends the game playing, and hope is extinguished forever for each person fooled by Satan as they wake in hell to await eternity.

All mankind stands accused in Adam's sin and in their own that follow on from each person's old sin nature. **Romans 3:9-23**. All have sinned, all need a Saviour, and there is only One! **Acts 4:12, 16:31**. Each person will face Him at the end of space-time and answer for their actions. Have they ignored God, acted independently of their Creator and Saviour, and even insulted his blood shed for them?

Narcissism cannot accept any orders, and cannot comprehend grace, mercy and love, for all they have selected by their choices are exploitation and abuse of others! They truly get what they have selected forever!

"Whatever is not of faith is sin". **Romans 14:23, Hebrews 11:6**. Those addicted to the satanic cosmos system may just ignore, or even insult God's provision, but God has made their fate clear, for they have selected the path of Satan, and it ends forever in the Lake of Fire. The "fashion of this world passes away". **1 Corinthians 7:13**. "And the world/cosmos system passes away and the lusts thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever". **1 John 2:17**. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up". **2 Peter 3:10**.

Satan's lies are only accepted by those desperate not to bow their knee before God, and sadly the majority are determined to be independent of their Maker. For a few that is atheism, but for most they want to feel they have a faith, even though it is as fake as it can be. Satanic religion is as devious as he is; with something for all tastes, just no saving truth. Satanic deception covers aestheticism with pleasant rituals, incense, music and sexual and other pleasures. He also covers off the fake "holy" people, who want legalism and self denial to make them feel superior and spiritual, but of course without any grace-faith based saving relationship with God. Satan doesn't care, as long as people don't have any real relationship with the real Lord Jesus!

RELIGION – (Satan's Main tool to Deceive, Distract and Destroy the foolish.)

1. Satan's religion is a humanly acceptable one: no sin, no judgment, no Saviour and no Hell. Satan appears as an angel of light, in whatever form will win hearts and minds and tranquilize the soul to the evil of sin, or distort doctrines just enough away from the truth to disable the believer and rob them of eternal reward and joy here. (**2 Corinthians 11:13-19, 26**)

2. Many pastors in the churches are servants of Satan's policy, knowingly or unknowingly. (**Isaiah 30:12, Jeremiah 2:8, 2 Peter 2:1-10**) They assist in keeping God's people asleep, and the unbelievers deceived, distracted and tranquilized any way that appeals to them until they are destroyed. The evil father of communism, Karl Marx, was telling the truth when he referred to "religion as the opium of the people", for the satanic religions, as alternatives to genuine faith based relationship are exactly that, opium!

3. Satan's strategy towards unbelievers is to keep them blinded to the gospel, and tranquilized into the details of this life, oblivious to the next. (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Colossians 2:8, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**)

4. Satan's strategy towards believers is:-
a) To confuse by false teaching. (**Matthew 7:15, Romans 16:18**)
b) To appeal to pride. (**2 Corinthians 10:12**)
c) To promote idolatry. (**Habakkuk 2:18,19**)
d) To promote legalism. (**1 Timothy 1:7-8**)

5. Satan's policy calls for counterfeit faith that will keep people from real faith.
a) Counterfeit gospel. (**2 Corinthians 11:3-4**)
b) Counterfeit pastors. (**2 Corinthians 11:13-15**)
c) Counterfeit communion. (**1 Corinthians 10:19-21**)
d) Counterfeit doctrine. (**2 Timothy 4:1**)
e) Counterfeit righteousness. (**Matthew 19:16-28**)
f) Counterfeit way of life. (**Matthew 23**)
g) Counterfeit power. (**2 Thessalonians 2:8-10**)
h) Counterfeit gods. (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**)

Notes

CONCLUDING CHALLENGE

REMEMBER WHO WE ARE – LIMITED CREATURES
(Not making the Error of Job's "friends")

JOB 38:1-7

1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

REFLECTIONS

Verses 1 – 3. The general name for God (Eloah) is changed abruptly to JHWH (Jehovah) here to emphasize that the Lord is taking charge of the situation now and speaking dominantly to these foolish theologians who have thought they knew the "secrets of God", but have spouted cosmos philosophy nonsense. All of the words of the "friends" of Job are flawed, with half truths and speculations masquerading as certainties. God will sweep away all the speculation about the "Angelic Conflict" that is behind Job's suffering, and centre the men in God's Holy Character. There wont be any trite and simple answers to Job's suffering, for this side of eternity there are not easy explanations for evil, for only when it is destroyed will we have the full picture.

The Lord addresses Job and forces him to face his finitude and limitations of understanding. God will not challenge the friends, as they "think they know", and such people need judgment, for they will not take truth, as their minds are made up by philosophical lies! God addresses the believer Job and demands him to answer, who it is that brings darkness to obscure wisdom and talks such nonsense as has been spoken. Who has darkened the men's minds? It is not God, but Satan himself, for it is his hand behind all that has occurred, and these men are "blinded (**2 Corinthians 3:14, 4:4, 1 John 2:11**) because they have presumed they knew more than they did. Arrogance is Satan's sin and they have fallen into it – which is Satan's policy of course. This is the heart of the Angelic Conflict for the minds of people; that they might join Satan in arrogance, rather than join the Lord and his people in humble and obedient prayerful Bible study.

Now is the Lord referring just to Job, or to all the men there? I believe it is to all the men, for we all face this faith choice daily. The Lord is making it clear that none of mankind have wisdom in the matter before them, and none of them have the answers to the deep issues they have raised. God is also challenging them to see that actually it doesn't matter either, for these things cannot be known this side of eternity! They must just walk, worship and work with God until they cross into eternity and can see these things as they are! At the moment we are looking through the "veil" but then "face to face", and we face the choice, will we humbly walk by faith, or stamp our foot and make demands of God?

It is Job alone however, as the true worshipper of the Lord amongst the group, who is challenged to stand and gird himself in his clothes properly, and bow before his Creator and make his defence. Job has been sitting in his filthy clothes upon the rubbish heap. The rain has washed him, but he is still very dishevelled and the Lord orders him to straighten himself up and make himself as presentable as possible. When we come before the Lord we are to be as well dressed as we can be and as clean and tidy as we can be. We are to demonstrate in our dress, cleanliness and posture that we accept our "creatureliness" and the Lord's rulership over every detail of our life.

Verses 4 – 7. Job is reminded of the truth of his confrontation with the Creator God. He is challenged to report his where-abouts when God made the universe. He was, like us all, in the mind of God, but not in any way comprehending that mind. Refer to the BTB studies on CREATION and ETERNITY, and sit with your limits as a creature and then return to your theological study in the humility and worship that is appropriate. Having challenged Job to speak about the origin of space-time and matter, the Lord then challenges him to speak about the limits of space-time. By these two questions the Lord challenges Job to confront what philosophers call the "Bounds of Sense".

We cannot even have a thought at this time that is not limited by the cognitive categories of space and time. These categories of thinking are fundamental to our presently limited human minds, and this side of eternity we cannot go beyond them. The Lord pushes Job philosophically to recognize that everything the "friends" have all been arguing over is well beyond them to comprehend, except at the most basic level. Even the angels are created beings, and they were there, as creatures of the Creator at the creation of this present universe, but even they are limited in their knowledge of it.

The Angelic host, Elect and Fallen, do not know what went on before their own creation, and even though they were there when time and space were made, they remain limited in their understanding. Refer to all the BTB studies on the ANGELS. It is the arrogance of men that creates the flawed theologies we have seen in this book of Job, and they all rest upon this issue, that limited men do not see their limits! This passage highlights the very central point of the Angelic Conflict and the warning that is there for each of us right now.

Arrogance and Pride, that are Satan's main sins, are our daily danger, and they find their open door to destroy our faith-walk at any time we forget who we are! We are limited as human beings, but we are as believers "IN CHRIST JESUS", and as we live that reality in Holy Spirit filled stability and power we are safe, but when we forget who we are in Him, we tend to waffle off on speculations that are well beyond our limited minds.

"In Him" the angels are either your servants, or your sworn but inferior enemies. The elect angels are neither your slaves, or your lords, but your "co-workers", your "fellow servants". **Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9**. John is very specifically told not to worship the angel who speaks with him! The Elect Angel is very clear about this, that to worship angels is to fall into one of Satan's religious errors, and be on the path of ritual and powerlessness. There are only two sides to the "Angelic Conflict", God's side and the enemy's side and worship of angels is the enemy's side! (More below.)

This is why so much "waffle" is spoken by liberal theologians, for they are unbelievers, or at best carnal and arrogant believers who are waffling on the basis of their arrogance and ignorance, not exegeting the Scriptures. They speculate and cover their foolishness by a web of words, but we are called to bring light, and that is only from the Lord who made us and this world. There is truth about these things only in the Scriptures, for all else is either based on the speculation of our limited minds, or the deception of the satanic side.

Notes

LIVING IN THE REALITY OF THE LAST PHASES OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

The context of our earthly service and worship is the Angelic Conflict, and the Incarnation of Immanuel transforms the universe, with the ex-Arch-Angel Lucifer defeated totally at the Cross and Resurrection, and through the person and work of Christ mankind is given the opportunity, by faith through grace, to be lifted up above the angels in our eternal position. This gigantic shift in the dynamic in the daily battles of the angelic conflict, is picked up by the author of Hebrews, and it is directly confronted in the first chapter. We are, as believers, to fully understand and live in this reality!

HEBREWS 1:1-9

1. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

KEY WORDS

Sundry	polumeros	piecemeal, over a long time.
Divers	polutropos	in many varied ways.
Spoke	Laleo	aorist, active, participle, with dative of advantage. Has spoken to, completed action in view, with benefit to those spoken to.
Last days		a phrase used by the Rabbis indicating the time of Messiah.
Spoken	laleo	aorist, active, indicative; once again the completed action of the verb. As the Lord spoke thru the prophets, so he has completed speaking thru Christ.
Appointed	tithemi	aorist, active, indicative; he has placed, appointed, assigned.
Heir	kleronomos	the one to whom the total deeds of the property fall as sole heir of all things.
Made	Poieo	aorist, active, indicative; he made, created, formed, completed action.
Worlds	aionas	plural, the ages of time (also physical astronomical worlds)
Being	Eimi	absolute being of the creator God in view here. JHWH.
Brightness	apaugasma	radiance, shekinah glory of God, radiating as the Sun, not reflecting like the moon. This is a direct claim of Godhead for the Son of God. He is JHWH. Express image character impression, stamp of the original, exact reproduction of,
His person	hupostasis	the substance of God. The nature/substance/essence of his being, of the Lord, is equal to, identical with God the Father.
Upholding	phero	present, active, participle; he dynamically holds the universe together, and is the one, whose power, directs its operation and destiny.
Word	rema	spoken word.
Power	dunamis	dynamic power; once again the Lord is active, not the passive “first cause”.
Purged	katharismos	cleansing, purification, in the sense of dealing with the spiritual needs.
Had	Poieo	aorist, middle, participle; in his own person he did the purging of sin, and the action is completed.
Sat down	kathizo	aorist, active, indicative; he took his seat of power and authority, as a king or general does once victory is won, or a task completed.
Right hand	dexia	the place of honour and power and authority. Refer Ephesians 1:20 also.
Majesty	megalosune	the majesty, glory and wonder of the highest kingship.

High upselos in the heavens(as high as you can get).

REFLECTION

The Introduction of the Unique Son. Verses 1 - 3

The writer of Hebrews has a central theme, that is, the pre-eminence of the Son, in his person over all created beings, and in His perfect work for mankind's salvation his pre-eminence over all previous works by God's servants, be they angelic or human. He is the unique person of the universe, the only one with the position, purpose and power of the "only born one" of God.

All elect individuals (angelic and human) within the Divine Drama of Redemption were part of the plan of God to bring the message of salvation, and all had their part to play and played it equally, until the Lord Jesus Christ came. He alone is head and shoulders above all the rest of the servants of the salvation plan, for he is both its author, with the Father, and He is its focus. He is the "game changer" for angels and human beings.

Hebrews is the book that with Colossians, tells us of the glory of the Lord; he is high, and here he is lifted up, and his relationship and ours ("In HIM") to the angels is forever changed.

SEVEN GLORIES OF HIS UNIQUENESS AS IMMANUEL:

1. Jesus Christ is the heir of all things.

2. Jesus Christ is the focal point of history.

3. Jesus Christ is the revealer of God.

4. Jesus Christ is co-equal with God.

5. Jesus Christ is the sustainer of the universe.

6. Jesus Christ is the Saviour of mankind.

7. Jesus Christ has won the Angelic Conflict. We share in his victory or in Satan's defeat; there is no third option or mankind.

While the revelation of God through the prophets was at times mediated by Angels, the Son is superior to angels. Therefore, he delivers through his life and work, a superior revelation, and superior and final work on mankind's behalf. The writer is making a strong contrast between the past and the present; he is in effect saying, to quote W B Yeats from his poem 1916, "all is changed, changed utterly, a terrible beauty is born".

The birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension/session of the Lord changes all history forever. There is now time before the Lord's Victory, and time after it. The contrast he is making underlines for the first Jewish believers in the Lord, that the Lord is superior to all they had in Judaism, and that they are to move on and away from their old way of worship and life to the new way he has opened up for them. With the torn Temple curtain the very fabric of Judaism has been torn from top to bottom. God has opened the way directly in to his presence, and there is no more need nor place for priests and sacrifices, and the very attitude towards the angels is also to shift with everything else.

Verse 1. The book begins with no introduction. The author prefers to remain hidden, and for a reason; his subject is Christ, and he does not want to get distracted onto any other person. There is no celebrity other than the Lord of glory, and this is the theme that he is going to try to get across to the early hearers of the letter, and through the same Holy Spirit to ourselves.

The letter begins with the person and plan of God, and goes straight to the point that God has communicated with man over the centuries. Man has never been left without witness in his creation. It has come in many different ways, at many different times and places, but man has never been without revelation.

It is interesting to observe that religious thought and practices are a part of all cultures and the archaeologists tell us that they have found no peoples who have not worshipped. Atheism is a recent phenomena, and a sign of the end, and as we have seen in this study, even Satan hates atheism and atheists, for he desires man's worship, he doesn't want alternatives to people worshipping him. Satan and the demons want to replace God, not eliminate the concept of God.

God has spoken in the past in many different ways and through many different means, but in these “last days” the Lord has spoken directly in the person, and through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer contrasts all previous history with the present revelation of the Lord. To the Jewish believers the system of Judaism was still their faith, the faith that looked for the coming Son and therefore the vindicated faith. They clung to it, to its rituals and the glory of the Temple system. All in Judaism looked forward to Messiah/Immanuel, but once HE came, all was changed, and people had to let go of “before” and get with “after”.

Judaism had all spoken of Messiah and it was all precious to the Jewish people for that. The writer is going to call them out, to tell them to walk away from their beloved rituals forever, and even to leave their precious city of Jerusalem itself, but he is gentle with them and does not rush to that point. He lays his case out systematically in this letter, and begins with the prophets, and moves from there to each of the elements of the system of Judaism, demonstrating point by point the superiority of the Lord and the need to separate themselves from the past completely, so as to better witness to the newness of life in Christ.

The contrast in these first verses is strong; ‘in the prophets’, is compared to, ‘in the Son’. The stark contrast is meant to be felt like a lightning bolt. Israel considered itself a nation built upon the Fathers, the Law, and the Prophets. By the end of verse one the writer has confronted the hearers with the fact that the Lord is superior to the Fathers, and the prophets. The fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and all the great prophets are consigned simply to the past, it is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, the Messiah – Immanuel - who is the person of the present and the future.

Verse 2. In verse two this superiority is underlined again by the concept of heirship. The Son has already been appointed the heir of all things; He now holds the title deeds to the inheritance passed on to him by the Fathers and the prophets, but even more, he is appointed heir by God the Father.

He is heir by post-victory appointment, through what he has done during his incarnation, but even before this the writer reminds us he was the creator of all things. He made the worlds that make up the space-time universe and all the creatures within it, including the angels. Note that the word translated “worlds” refers to far more than the physical world and planets, and universe, it refers to the various ages of history and all within space-time, and all beyond it.

This concept takes us even further than the notion of a physical creator, and brings us face to face with eternity, “before” space and time were made! He formed the very elements that form the equation, E = MC2. Our very use of a time word to describe non-space-time reminds us of our limitations.

Verse 3. Verse three goes even further, and would have shaken the first hearers and brought them to their knees. The first point the writer makes is that the Son was the very ‘Shekinah” glory of the Godhead. To be the brightness of the glory of God he had to shine in his own person as God. He is JHWH of the past age of Israel, and he is the Son in this new age! He is the exact image of the Godhead, the very substance (hupostasis = standing stable under one essence) of God.

This is the most powerful verse claiming the deity of Christ. Not only was he creator of the ages, he is upholder of all matter and energy in the universe. He is not a “clock-winder” for the universe, but the dynamic force ever behind it all. He established the power within the atoms that make up the universe, and he controls their power and their ultimate destiny. The universe and all it contains, and where it is going, is all in his hands.

He spoke the universe into existence, and it was and is under the power of his spoken word. He visited this tiny planet to fulfill his plan, and once he did that he re-entered heaven and sat down on the “right hand” of God the Father. Remember, when you read this that the meaning of these words to the hearers is the clue to the significance of each of these verses.

It is the Jewish way of seeing things that gives us the clue to the author’s points. Messiah’s role was to “purge sin”, and the task was perfectly completed. The word used indicates the completeness of both his cleansing and purification of the sin problem of mankind; the good news that we have to proclaim is that the sin-death problem for mankind has been solved perfectly and forever.

He sits at the right hand of the “greatness on high”. To sit in the ancient world was the sign of the person in authority, and to sit on the right hand of a king was the sign of heirship; it was the place of power. While the king ruled he ruled through the actions of the one who sat on his right hand.

This is the writer's point; the Lord Jesus Christ is the active ruler of the universe, sitting at the place of power. He is perfectly secure in his position, in his power, his purpose and plan, and has provision for those who serve him. We serve the living God, and he is in the place of power and provision for us. In living relationship with Him we have all the resources we need to follow his instructions, for he is King of kings and Lord of lords.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

There is only one true Celebrity in the history of this world and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us each examine ourselves in the matter of pride, for before him all our pride must evaporate like the mist when the sun rises. **Matthew 6:28-34, James 1:10-11**. The writer brings us face to face with the glory of the Lord as our Saviour God, and this glory must get into us, enliven us and burn out all impurity and foolishness. In the Lord's service there are no celebrities, only servants, who are honoured, and will receive great blessing now and forever, in and through their service. **John 12:26, 13:4-17**.

Do we remember our place, not in false humility but in truth and confidence; we are the servants of the living God; we are not just servants, but members of his Royal Family through our position in Christ Jesus. These things are things to glory in each day. No believer who knows these things has any shortage of matters for prayer and praise daily.

All the people groups in the history of the earth have worshipped. They have done so in many different ways through the ages, and the writer here tells us that all is changed by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The question we must ask ourselves is, do we worship as if we understand the final and superior nature of the revelation contained in the person and work of the Lord?

He is our great Creator - God and he has completed the work for mankind's redemption, and sits at the right hand of majesty waiting for the moment, that he alone knows, when he will end the process of this age of history by his return. Do we see this? Do our actions and our worship reflect the knowledge of this? Do we live with the victor in the Angelic Conflict, and do we walk close to Him to take full advantage of that victory?

All that is in the realm of space and time were made by him, and he is King of all! What is our response to all this? Do we worship his majesty, or is our worship as formal and stale as the Israelite's had become within the confines of their Rabbi controlled (Rabbinic) Judaism. The writer will call these people out from their formal religiosity to a living daily newness of faith and worship of the Lord of lords. As we reflect on who he is let us also reflect on the need to test all our actions, and all our worship to ensure it is appropriate to the one who has called us to live in his light. **John 8:12, 12:35-46, Ephesians 5:8**.

Do we see the position of the Lord now? He is seated at the place of power over all that is in space and time and beyond it. Is there any shortage of power with him? The answer can only be a resounding, "NO!!!" If the Lord has the power and glory, we have the position in Him whereby we have the provisions we need to do all that he asks us to do. Do we rejoice in his power and provision or are we moaning in the midst of our problems? Given his high position, we have no problems, only opportunities to see his power work out in time, over which he is Lord!

What a difference this knowledge will make to our lives our witness and our worship, but only if it is applied to the testing situations of our daily life. This letter is full of such challenges; let us meet them with confidence in the person and power of the one whom we lift our voices to and worship.

B. PASTORAL

God has never left man without his witness and word. God has always spoken, even though in many different ways; by direct promises, by words heard aloud, by dreams, by visions, by laws, by rituals, through history's processes, by poetry given to holy men and women, through teaching of Holy Spirit empowered people. All these have had but one objective, and the writer's point is, that objective has been reached in his age; the long expected Messiah has come.

God has not just spoken, he has come, he has pitched his tent amongst his people, the creator has become a creature and dwelt amongst us. He has revealed his plan down the ages, and in this generation, the writer says, he has taken his prophesied place as the central person in this plan.

Whenever we stand before people to proclaim the gospel message, let us remember that this is it! He has come, God has stepped down and entered his creation; this is the visited planet! The glory of this “good news” must never be lost. The incarnation is the amazing event of all history. **Isaiah 7:14, 8:8.**

All too often we follow the teaching of men, and the emphasis that our church has had rather than the central message of our apostolic faith. That central message is the message of the incarnation, the glory and wonder of the person and work of Christ.

Our early brothers and sisters in Christ did not preach, “hell fire and damnation”, they preached the “good news” of a “visited planet”, and a completed victorious plan for the salvation of all who would place their faith and hope in the risen Lord of all.

Their message was a hope filled and powerful one to a world hungry for light. In our day, as in the days of our spiritual fathers, unsaved mankind is seeing more and more the black holes of hopelessness, they see the dark of evil. Our task is to let the light shine so that they might see hope.

In all our preaching the central message MUST get through to all the hearers; that the Lord has come, that he rules and that his plan is heading to it’s inevitable conclusion. History is “HIS STORY”, and the next main event is his return to deal with the rebellious angles and people, and then rule on earth. Some say, “wow, isn’t the tribulation next?”, well, yes it is, but it’s not the “main event”, just another satanic side track for those who reject the Lord of Lords.

Our message must emphasize the glory and person of the Lord for it is he alone who rules and we are on His side, the winning side – indeed he has already won. This positive and powerfully confidence filled message must be the one that all hear from us as his preachers. Christianity is Christ, and his person and work are all positive. There is nothing negative in the person or work of the risen Lord. The negativity flows only from total rejection of his person and his work, for if he alone brings hope, to walk away or ignore is to lose all hope!

The unbelievers must know when they walk away from Him, that they walk away from hope, power, life and peace; they deny themselves an eternal hope filled and joyful future, for they have walked away from the Lord of and over all. This is the powerful message that flows from these first verses of this great letter. Let us ensure we get it right so that all might know the one of whom this letter speaks.

Hebrews 1:4-9

“4. Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?’ And again, ‘I will be unto him a father, and he shall be unto me a Son’ 6 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, ‘and let all the angels of God worship him’ 7 And of the angels he saith,’ who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire’ . 8 But unto the Son he saith, ’thy throne oh God is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. ”

NOTE THE QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The number of quotations from the Old Testament is very significant in this passage as seen below.

“Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?’ (**Psalm 2 : 7**) And again, ‘I will be unto him a father, and he shall be unto me a Son’ (**2 Samuel 7 : 14**). 6 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, ‘and let all the angels of God worship him’ (**Psalm 97:7, Deuteronomy 32:43**). And of the angels he saith, ’who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire’ (**Psalm 104: 4**). But unto the Son he saith, ’thy throne oh God is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (**Psalm 45: 6, 7**). ”

KEY WORDS

Being made	ginomai	aorist, middle, participle; having become.
So much	tosouto	by how much more!
Better	kreitton	better by comparison, also stronger, more noble, more powerful than others.
Inheritance	kleronomeo	**perfect**, active, indicative; completed action, results going on forever, he has obtained the inheritance of majesty and glory, as the heir of all things.
Excellent	diaphoros	comparative also, going further than kreittos; more excellent above all kinds of beings, (here referring to the angels, who are “more excellent” than men.
Thou art	eimi	absolute, you are!, you ever will be!
Son	Huios	adult son able to be the heir.
Today	semeron	“The day spoken of here is the day of his glorious victory and vindication. The resurrection, ascension, and glorification should be viewed as forming a unity each one contributing to the exultation of the son to transcendental heights of power and dignity”(Hughes). Quoted in Reinecker, Vol 2, page 319.
Begotten	gennao	**perfect,** active, indicative; once again, completed results that go on forever are in view here. The Godhead causes the birth of the Son in the human realm.
Will be	Eimi	future, middle, indicative; within the Godhead, the Father adopted a role towards the Son, as of a human father to support the son in his role/work. The Son also adopted an attitude of respectfulness towards the Father as of a son towards the father who supports him. This is HOLY GROUND here; there is far more here than we can fully know from this side of eternity.
Bringeth in	eisago	aorist, active, subjunctive; to bring into the world, in sense of presentation of a king to his subjects.
Worship	proskuneo	aorist, active, imperative, with the dative of advantage; a command, let the knee be bowed, fall on your knees and worship; there is benefit in this!
Who	ho	Literally, “HE is the one who”
Makes	Poieo	present, active, participle; keeps on making, ordering, directing, the angels to be.
Ministers	leitourgos	minister, servant, temple worker/priest, bringing God to man.
Flame of fire	puros phloga	heat/fire, a flame. Is this personification or symbolic, or do the angels really take the form of flames of fire? It may underline the fact that they are formed of a different substance that us; the matter of their bodies is energy organised in a different way to ours.
O God	o theos	the Son is here referred to as God. It is a strong reference.
Forever	eis ton aiona tou aionos	is unto the ages of the ages.
Sceptre	rabdos	the symbol of ruling power over the earth and the ages.
Righteousness	euthuteros	uprightness, what is absolutely right, with honour, truth and correctness.
Love	Agapao	aorist, active, indicative; who have loved righteousness.
Hate	miseo	aorist, active, indicative; who have hated
Iniquity	anomia	lawlessness, the rejection of God’s laws and standards.
Anointed	chrio	aorist, active, indicative; has anointed as a king.
Gladness	agalliasis	gladness and joy of the celebration of coronation of a king.
Fellows	metochos	partners, companions, comrades, colleagues.

REFLECTION

This section builds on the first three verses and demonstrates the deity of Christ, and his superiority to all created beings, for as verse two pointed out, he created the ages of time. He is the creator, of angels, universes, and mankind! Let us look at the whole section first by way of summary.

THE SEVEN SUPERIORITIES OF JESUS CHRIST: (VERSES 4 - 14)

1. His superior name. vs. 4-5 (Exalted humanity)

2. He is the "First-Born" of all humanity; he is heir, priest for the whole family of mankind, and ruler of all. The Second Advent is when all will see Him take up His privileges as the Firstborn. vs. 6 (The right of Rule, Priesthood, and Inheritance.)

3. He created Angels and provides their function. He is their superior and King. vs. 7

4. He has an eternal Throne, superior to all other authorities. vs.8 (Eternal Son, Eternal Throne - based on the perfect Plan of God).

5. His appointment(Anointing) is based on the Eternal Plan of God (Divine Decrees). vs. 9

6. We all change, but as Immutable God, He never changes. He is superior to what we call "the laws of nature", he does not decay and die, and through his power we too enter this and defeat space, time, and death. vs. 10-12 (Eternal Life, Eternal Sovereignty).

Remember, He created the ages of time. He is beyond the space/time structure of this universe and he holds it together. The end of the universe is described in 2 Peter 3 : 10 - 13, and is pictured as a dissolving of the elements, at the time when the Lord stops holding them together, the universe implodes on itself.

7. His completed work was secured through his victory in the Angelic Conflict, by his defeat of Satan on the Cross, on resurrection and ascension day. vs. 13-14

The reason to set out all these things is made clear by the writer of Hebrews; "therefore", because of the place and position of the Lord as ruler of all, we must get serious about learning of what he requires and being obedient to it. "We must pay much closer attention to the things we have heard." (Doctrines of the Church Age). With this overview in mind let us examine each verse of this section in turn.

Verse 4. In his humanity the Lord Jesus Christ was born physically inferior to the angels, (Hebrews 2:7, 9,), but he became their superior, as God-Man, in his humanity, through victory in the Angelic Conflict (Invisible War) through the Cross and Empty Tomb, and so inherited a greater inheritance then they have. This means he has also a greater name. What does this mean?

A name in the ancient world often was a title, for example, Caesar was a name but actually a title for rulership. The name given indicated the status of the person, and new names were given to adults to reflect their status and achievements. In Roman times there are many examples of this, (eg, Augustus, Germanicus, Asiaticus), and in recent English history the great general who defeated Napoleon in the early nineteenth century was given the Dukedom of Wellington after which he was known as "Wellington". His title became his name. Think then, in light of this practice what the writer means.

What are some of the titles of the Lord Jesus Christ? In the Bible Topic Book there are fifty [50!] names listed that refer to the Lord. Many of them demonstrate the superiority of the Lord over the angels. Keep remembering all through this passage, that you are in union with Him by faith and so you share in his position and power and plan.

If we look briefly at a few, that the angels and man use for him we will see the truth behind the verse. He is called by them and us, Son, Lord, Heir, King of Kings, Saviour, JHWH, Emmanuel, and Elohim. All these names are superior to the names of the angels, and the writer will take a number of these with passages from the scriptures to illustrate the Lord's prophesied superiority. He has, as the victor over sin and death, as the God-Man, "inherited" forever a superior title and position to all the angelic host, and so we, in union with Him, share this exulted position of superiority to the angels, who the author will go on to point out, now serve us. This is a momentous point and it will be repeated many times in the New Testament Letters.

Verse 5. To underline this lordship and rulership of all things the writer asks the question; to which of the angels has God the Father ever said, "you are my Son"? This follows the same sort of question in verse four where he asks, "to which of the angels has God the Father ever said, sit down at my right hand?"

The answer to both questions of course is, 'to none', for that place and position was the Lord's alone. There is only one Saviour and Lord of all and it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the central person of history for he is both creator and controller of time itself, as the writer has already identified in verses two through four. The Lord Jesus holds the universe together, and when he acts finally to wind it up, it will fold up like an old tired blanket. **2 Peter 3:10-18**.

The writer will go on through the next ten verses to quote seven passages from the Old Testament which prophetically, centuries before the Cross/Resurrection, pointed out that Messiah was superior to angels. Logic then follows, if we are now in vital and eternal union with the Lord Jesus Christ, then we are also now superior to angels in our relationship with Christ! To operate within the "Angelic Conflict" we must understand this fully and operate in our assigned and appropriate role as children of God!

The phrase, "this day I have begotten you", was to cause great problems throughout early church history, for the heretics of that day, through to our own, argued that this meant the Lord was not equal to the Father, but was a created servant and therefore inferior to the Father, while being superior to angels and men. What does this passage mean?

Note first the **perfect tense** in the Greek, indicating an act at one point in time, with results that go on forever. Then look at the word, "today", for as noted above in the Key Words section, this refers to the moment of victory not the crib in the manger. The concept of both "begotten" and "Son" (sonship) refer to his heirship not his being born as humanity. It is his position in heaven now that is the writer's focus in this letter, and what led to that. The virgin birth and his taking on humanity will be mentioned in verse six, but his rulership stems from his victory in the Angelic Conflict and that is the "day" when he is declared the exulted and ruling Son.

There is a good word study in looking up every reference to the Lord as a "Son", for there are many verses that refer to the Lord as Son. In the world of Jesus day there was a distinction made between a humanly born Son and the Son as Heir of all things, and a father would often wait until his natural son had proved himself worthy to rule over the house before formally adopting him as his son and heir. In Roman days the ceremony for this was called "Toga Virilis", and could occur at any time the Father believed the boy was mature and able to take adult responsibility.

The Lord is "Son of David", and "Son of Man", by his human birth to the Virgin Mary, by obedience in baptism the Father calls him, "Beloved Son". Through his ministry he is called the "Son of God", but it is by victory in the Angelic Conflict, through the Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension that he enters heaven and becomes the exulted Son, the Heir of all things, the ruling Son at the right hand of the Father. The writer looks at this as "the day of His exultation".

The next phrase is equally important for us to bow our knees before. We are on "Holy Ground" here, and are at best scratching the surface of meaning and significance of these things, that will only be fully known in heaven itself where, freed from the shackles of time and space ourselves, we can see as clearly as the Lord does. The Lord was the true Son of the Father in that he took the role assigned to him in perfect obedience and fulfilled it perfectly. We are called to be fully the children of God we are enabled by His work to be.

Verse 6. Here we come to more comfortable ground for us, to the Christmas event, the incarnation. When he was born as man to the Virgin Mary the angels were there and they worshipped him; even before his victory on the Cross and over death at the empty tomb, they worshipped Him. Even before his victory the angels recognised the one who was born to be King of Kings. If they worshipped him as the baby in the manger, how much more will they worship him as the heir of all things?

By starting at heaven and working back to earth the writer has underlined the superiority of the Lord over angels powerfully, and reminded us that we need to look up more often ourselves, and remember that we serve a risen Lord, who sits in the place of power.

We have access to that place in prayer, **Hebrews 4:16**, and we will live forever in that place in the new heavens and earth that are beyond space-time, but right here and now we are called to live in the position we have through Him and His work.

Verse 7 In this verse the writer underlines the difference in role and position of the angels compared to the Lord. Our Lord is referred to as the "servant", **Isaiah 42:1-4**, as quoted in Matthew 12, but even as the servant of the Father, sent to win our salvation, he has servants, as we do, and the writer points out, those servants are the angels. The angels serve both the Lord and ourselves as his children by faith.

The angels are our servants; they are the Lord's ministering spirits to the believers, to protect us in the Angelic Conflict. The angels were described by the early Hebrew writers as either like fire or wind/spirit/breath (Hebrew - ruach), both of which remind us that they are made of a different substance than us. Though individually superior in form and power now they are our servants, and through our position in Christ, they are inferior to us, and certainly inferior to the Lord of all. 1 John 4:4**.**

Verse 8 The passage from Psalm 45 refers to the ruling power and majesty of the Lord. His royal throne (thronos) is forever; he has won a throne by his work on the Cross, that is an everlasting victory. The symbol of world rulership, the sceptre, is the sceptre of righteousness, for that is the nature of his victory; it was the victory of righteousness over sin and evil and death. He has a kingdom, and he is a king forever. The angels are servants forever, but the Lord's service to the Father makes him King forever after.

Verse 9. The Lord's perfect character, as will be revealed in the person and work of Jesus the Messiah, is prophesied here in Psalm 45, and the writer of this letter reminds us all that it referred to our Lord. He loved righteousness; he was perfectly righteous. He alone was fit and able to go to the Cross and pay the sacrifice for the sin of mankind, and he did it in perfect righteousness, as the perfect sacrifice. Righteousness and justice are the two sides of the character of God that meet at the Cross as they met above the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. **Psalm 89:15, 97:2, Isaiah 9: 6-7**. In his perfect person and completed work the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the elements that were part of the Mosaic Law, right down to being the living fulfillment of the picture of the Messiah in the very structure of the Ark.

For his completed work he is anointed as the victorious King, and is exulted, receiving a higher place above his companions upon the earth, his disciples, and also all mankind who will follow him. He has been lifted up, as a man, above all mankind, through his victorious work in defeating the power of sin and death, and has become LORD OF ALL "lords" (angelic forces) AND KING OF ALL KINGS (human rulers).

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

We celebrate Christmas, the day of the remembrance (don't worry that its clearly the wrong day selected by Constantine) of the Lord's human birth to the Virgin Mary, and it is important to remember the incarnation, for our salvation depends on his being "Immanuel", fully human as well as truly God, but why is it that for most, we do not refer to or celebrate the Ascension to heaven and the time when He came into his true Sonship and Heirship of all things, for this is his place now. **Isaiah 7:13-17, 9:1-7, 13, 21.**

He is no longer the "gentle Jesus meek and mild" of the song, he is the ruler of all things, and he sits at the right hand of majesty. It is this exulted place that has significance to us, for it is from here that he answers prayer and controls the destiny of his church. We need again to be reminded of heavenly realities, for our present confidence, eternal destiny and eternal security is rooted and grounded in these things.

In our daily life we will find the tests of faith easier to handle if we have the "eternal life perspective"; that is, if we see things from the perspective of eternity rather than just space-time. The biggest challenge is often not sin; rather it is distraction. We are distracted by the things of space and time, (the things that will not last), and so we miss out on seeing the things that matter eternally.

The Lord calls us as the risen, exulted Lord of glory, seated at the right hand of majesty: this is our Lord and King. He is the one we are to serve and look to. Have you this day had that vision of reality? For that is the truth and you are in vital living union with Him!

It is vital we know the details of his earthly ministry and remember his words, for they are our guide to life here and now, but it is equally vital we remember where and who he is now and worship his majesty. Have you today bowed before his majesty and given praise for who he is and the power he has over your life? Many today are living their lives in awe of angels and in fear of demons, rather than seeing the truth about our position in Christ and the angel's relationship to us now, in light of that.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews has begun his letter with a strong challenge to get our perspective right. The Lord is lord of all, and that means he has power and ruling authority over angels, (both the elect and fallen angels/demons).

Through our position with him we are in a superior place ourselves to the angels and demons. **1 John 4:4**. No angel can do anything other than obey him, and the elect angels are our servants under the authority of the Lord to serve us so that we can be without distraction in the Angelic Conflict.

Their job is to handle the demonic forces that might side track and hurt us, so that we are free to do our job of life witness, evangelism and teaching about the Lord of Glory. Let the angels do their job, do not give a thought to the demons, leave them for the angels to deal with, and concentrate on doing your job believer! You cannot be better protected than you are in Christ Jesus, walking in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord desires us to have a daily appreciation of his position, his power, and his plans for us. He is Lord of the angels, and he is our Lord; let us serve him in appreciation of these things, and obedience to his clear teachings. In light of this, "Give no thought to your life…." Just serve the Lord in spirit and in truth. Jesus words are challenging! **Matthew 6:25-34**.

B. PASTORAL

As pastors are we not challenged as we read this letter? After this study, return to a word by word study of the entire book of Hebrews. Lead the Lord's people under your care to the fullness of their position in Christ Jesus!

How much emphasis in our teaching have we given to the present position, power and place of the Lord Jesus as king of kings and lord of lords? Do people get the impression of majesty when they hear us speak of the Lord? We serve a risen Saviour, an exulted Lord, a coming King, and this powerful image is the one that must be before our people at all times in their daily battles in the world of distraction in which we live.

The Lord's superiority over angels and demons is to be clearly taught. Too many live as if the Angelic Conflict depends on them! The Lord Jesus Christ is in control and has already won the war, and we are to live as victors, not be cowering like cowards in fear of demons, or in awe of angels. They are either our servants or our enemies; our servants, the elect angels follow the Lord's direction to keep us safe and secure, while the demons are dealt with by the angels, and the demons can do nothing with us unless the Lord allows them! **1 John 4:4**.

True Biblical perspective saves us from fear, but the people must hear these truths before they can believe and apply them. Let us preach the whole counsel of God's Word and so save our brethren from fear and distraction.

FOLLOW YOUR DAILY ORDERS BELIEVER

Be Filled with the Holy Spirit!

Be filled with the teaching of the Word of Life! Feed on God's Word with passion and joy.

Be filled with prayerfulness! Keep on coming before the father's throne. **Hebrews 4:16**

Be filled with a focus on God's Path for you through this brief life! No distractions!

Let us finish our study of this vital topic by looking at the three parallel passages that pass on our "Daily Orders" from Paul's house arrest confinement in his first Roman Imprisonment.

Notes

Ephesians 1:15-22

1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16
Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our
Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the
knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is
the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what
is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his
mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his
own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and
dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22
And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23
Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

KEY WORDS

Heard	Akouo	To hear, Hearken [Aorist Active Participle]
Faith	Pistis	Faith, Faithfulness, Steadfastness
Love	Agape	Love
Saints	Hagios	Set apart, Separate, Holy
Cease	Pauomai	To pause Cease [Present Middle Indicative]
Thanks	Eucharisteo	To thank, Be thankful [Present Active Participle]
Making	Poieo	To do Make [Present Middle Participle]
Mention	Mneia	Mention
Prayers	Proseuche	Prayer, Pouring Out
Glory	Doxa	Glory
Give	Didomi	To Give [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Spirit	Pneuma	Spirit
Wisdom	Sophia	Wisdom, Skill
Revelation	Apokalupsis	Uncovering
Knowledge	Epignosis	Full Knowledge
Eyes	Opthalmos	Eye
Understanding	Dianoia	Whole mind, Intellect, Understanding
Enlightened	**Photizo**	**To give light [Perfect, passive, participle]**
Know	**Oida**	**To see, have seen , Known [Perfect Active Infinitive]**
Hope	Elpis	Hope
Calling	Klesis	Calling
Riches	Ploutos	Riches
Glory	Doxa	Glory
Inheritance	Kleronamia	Possession, Obtained by lot
Exceeding	Huperballo	To cast beyond, Surpass
Greatness	Megethos	Greatness
Power	Dunamis	Ability, Power
Believe	Pisteuo	Adhere to Trust, Rely on [Present Active Participle]
According	Kata	According
Working	Energeia	Energy in working
Mighty	Ischus	Power Strength
Wrought	Energeo	To work in [Aorist Active Indicative]
Raised	Egeiro	To Raise, Raise up
Dead	Nekros	Dead
Set	Kathizo	To cause to sit down [Aorist Active Participle]
Right Hand	Dexios	Right Hand
Heavenly Places	Epouranios	Heavenly, in or on heaven
Far Above	Huperano	Over above
Principality	Arche	Beginning, Principality
Power	Exousia	Authority, Privilege
Might	Dunamis	Power
Dominion	Kuriotes	Lordship
Name	Onoma	Name
Named	Onomazo	To give a name, To name [Present Passive Participle]
Only	Monon	Alone
World	Aion	Age, Indefinite Time, Dispensation

Come	Mello	To be about to be [Present Active Participle]
All	Pas	All
Under	Hupo	Under
Feet	Pous	Foot
Gave	Didomi	To Give [Aorist Active Indicative]
Head	Kephale	Head
Over	Huper	Above, Beyond
Church	Ekklesia	That which is called out
Body	Soma	Body
Fullness	Pleroma	Fullness
Filleth	Pleroo	To fill, Make full [Present Middle Participle]

REFLECTION

Verse 15 Paul had led many people in the Province of Galatia to the Lord, but the Province of Asia had been evangelized by others initially for Paul had been initially hindered by the Holy Spirit from even going there. **Acts 16:6**. He had eventually gone there and had built upon others foundation in the right timing of the Lord. He had heard of them well before he met them and then was used by the Lord to teach and strengthen them. Even so he had been based in Ephesus and had not apparently ventured far up the Lychus Valley to this point. **Colossians 1:3-4**.

In the midst of a thoroughly pagan Province, the first to embrace the very worship of man as god in the Emperor Cult, these believers had embraced faith in Jesus. They had believed in the person and work of one who had lived, died, and rose again in another place, and whom they had never seen. On the basis of hearing the truth they had believed the truth by faith. They embraced the truth by faith, and rejected the devil's evidence of the power of the demon-gods, that they could see with their eyes daily amongst their fellow citizens. There were healings and many other "signs" of power in paganism, and there still are many to be seen today. They choose holy faith rather than popular, pleasurable, and powerful paganism.

Note what he has heard of them; firstly their faith in the Lord Jesus, and secondly their love for all the saints. They had powerful faith in the midst of the best tricks and tools of Satan in this province, and it was faith that had already "worked out" in their daily lives. James had already identified that faith and works are inseparable when they are real. **James 2:14-26**. John will, many years later, write a sermon to go with the Gospel that bears his name, and we call that sermon, the First Letter of John. In it he will further emphasize the centrality of faith and fruit being together as two sides of the same entity, namely genuine relationship with the Lord Jesus.

John identified, in the letter designed to go with the Gospel, that the genuine believer in the Lord Jesus will be identified by their love. Firstly by their lack of love towards the world and all it stands for. **1 John 2:15-17**. Secondly by their love for the brethren, who they see are just like them, sinners who have found their Saviour. **1 John 3:13-24**. Thirdly they are known by their love for the Lord. This is third because we only see this through the evidence of the two earlier actions. **1 John 4:9-19**.

Verse 16 Since he heard of the churches of the Lychus Valley and those major coastal cities of the province he has not ceased praying for them daily. Paul was not distracted by busyness from his prayers for the saints, for he saw that these people were woven into his life as his family and his daily care and concern for them was expressed in his daily prayers for them. In light of his earlier references to Election and Predestination, can you see clearly that such doctrines as he understood them did not hinder prayer for the saints.

The biblical doctrines associated with Election enhanced apostolic prayer; they did not end prayer. Just because God has the answers and all the details of the future for us, doesn't mean we just rest silently in a fatalistic universe. No believer in Jesus joins the Calvinist or Moslem in saying fatalistically, "In Sallah", or "God wills it". Such an approach is not biblical and certainly not apostolic, for they believed "prayer changes things". Now in light of Paul's statements about election already, how can prayer change things that are settled in eternity past? Paul prayed for these people, and he asked them to pray for him. He believed that both ways prayer was useful and powerful and makes a difference.

Election biblically means that in eternity past God has seen/decided all the events of time, and knows the end and all the details of the process to achieve it, <u>but we do not</u>. Election means that we face our limits and our dependency upon the Lord and that means we obey the commands of the Lord Jesus, who we have accepted as our Saviour and Lord. <u>He commands us to pray, and so we pray intelligently</u>; in accordance with doctrines revealed, one of which is Election, and one is Free Will.

When we see how Paul prayed we can see that he, with the other apostles, interpreted election to mean we were safe in the Lord's Plan and Power, can be assured of His prepared provisions for all circumstances, and we are to pray in accordance with that confidence for the guidance needed to make the right decisions in accordance with the tests and provisions of that eternal plan.

Prayer is offered to help us all recognize and embrace the provisions that we know will come in the Lord's timing in accordance with the eternal plan. Prayer changes our attitude towards things, but not into fatalistic acceptance, but into a dynamic cooperation with the plan through the exercise of our free will in accordance with the doctrines of the Word of God that we see as more real than the worrying events that may surround us. Worry is embraced, not fatalistically, that "what will be will be", but in actively seeking what the Lord is doing and dynamically seeking all activities that will place us in the best possible place to glorify the Lord in the Plan we see unfolding, and are active in our role within it.

Worry, doubt, fear and concerns about future direction is cast upon the Lord, seeking his way through by dynamic actions taken on our part under the Holy Spirit's direction. **1 Peter 5:5-10**. Calvinistic and Moslem fatalism make a believer passive, allowing themselves to be swept along by divinely caused events, whereas biblical theology makes the believer active. We do not just body surf the wave of divine direction, we actively surf the wave, positioning ourselves to obtain maximum joy, maximum power, maximum glory to the Lord in the work he enables us to do on the way.

Believing prayer is about positioning in the plan for maximum impact of our lives for Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, casting all our cares upon Him on the way through, and seeking out every opportunity to bring glory to Him. It is also prayer that is centered round thanksgiving for all received already and all that will be received as we advance down the path of blessing before us. Paul is absolutely confident that all things will work out for maximum blessing, for the believers of Asia and he in Rome are in the divine plan and that is the place of thankfulness and blessing. **Romans 1:8-9, Philippians 1:3-4, 4:7-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:17**.

Do we ask for things in this Pauline approach to prayer? Most certainly we do, for Paul did, and we are told to follow apostolic patterns. **Matthew 6:9-15, Jude 3**. How do we do this? In the doctrine of "Prayer" (see below) we see this being applied in the analysis of petition and desire in prayer. In every prayer we make there are these two aspects to the prayer; firstly, what we exactly ask for – our "petition", and secondly what we deeply desire behind the request. When both these aspects of our prayer line up with the will of the Lord for us we will always find our answer to prayer, but even more, we will have learned greatly about what it is the Lord wants for us. We are limited creatures and so our very desires need to be educated by the Lord.

Verse 17 The essence of Paul's prayer for them was that they might be empowered by knowledge of the holy Character of God and his Plan for them; that they might be dynamic members of the eternal plan, praising God in time and rejoicing for all eternity in the eternal rewards they have as a result of their Holy Spirit filled service. What man needs is not more self knowledge, but revelation-knowledge of their maker! Self centered knowledge is of no value at all, for we are not able to comprehend the full eternal realities that underline this universe, so why know more about our limits? Let us accept our limitations as creatures and hear what the creator has to say to us!

Biblically obedient Prayer is a two way process; it is being taught by the Lord about his character and his eternal plan; it is not a recitation of our wants and desires! It is orientation to God's character and plan that delivers results in time and eternity; not us dragging God into line to our desires, which are based on our very limited understanding. Prayer is not making helpful suggestions to God, but aligning with His eternal plan. At the heart of the process we need to hear and learn from the Lord more about his character and will for us. **2 Corinthians 4:1-6, 2 Peter 3:18, 1 John 2:1-6**. Do we engage in intelligent prayer, or shopping list recitations, with the daily "helpful suggestions" to the Lord about what He ought to do?

Verse 18 Paul's desire for the people of the Roman Province of Asia, and the Holy Spirit's desire for all believers through time, is that we might be "enlightened"; seeing the truth about God, the Plan, and our part in the plan to bring glory to the Lord. It is not some weird form of "enlightenment" from some fake "guru" that we need, but the genuine light coming on from the Creator-Saviour, who can reveal to us the right path for the creature to follow. We need God's light to shine, not any fake lights of man. **Matthew 15:14, Luke 6:39**. Eternity has touched time, and we need guidance, and we have it in relationship with Christ Jesus – note the two perfect tenses here – eternal blessed results are assured.

In **Isaiah 30:15-21** the Lord's prophet tells the people that they must trust God and His Word, for if they do not they will panic, run and be destroyed when the pressure comes on.

If you are determined to use your own plan, rather than God's, then be prepared for the disaster which is to come. Because if you do things your way God will wait until you stop and learn, before he can work with you for your blessing. He wants to bless you but your disobedience is making him wait. We must recognize what one old pastor of mine used to say, "God is a gentleman, and he will wait until all your human strength solutions are over, and you are looking only to Him, for he will share his glory with none but those who are 100% focused upon Him". God is tapping His foot waiting to bless you, but that blessing must come God's way, not our way.

In **Isaiah 30 verses 20-21**, Isaiah notes that God will always provide his people godly bible teachers, but we are not to deviate from their teaching, for we must be guided through troubled places by bible doctrine alone. It is important to understand and be guided by God's Word. What Paul is talking to the Ephesians about, Isaiah is talking about to the Jewish survivors of the Assyrian invasion 750 years before. This aspect of God's plan does not change through the ages. If you reject the Word of God nothing that you face will make sense at all, and there will be no blessing for you. The only safe path through this world is God's path for us; all other ground is shifting sand. **Matthew 7:26**.

Verse 19 God's inheritance for his saints is marvelous beyond words, and forms the basis of our confidence as we face the difficulties of this life. "Hope" in verse eighteen is the Greek word "elpis" and it means a strong confidence that is built upon certainty, and our certainty is built upon the Word of God, which rests for assurance upon the character of God. We do not rest upon the strictness and inflexibility of God, but upon the riches of his grace. It is true he will share his glory with no-one, but all that means is that we need to set aside all human efforts without spiritual power and walk and work in the power of the Holy Spirit only. God's power is fully available to all who walk in the Spirit.

It is the "exceeding greatness of his power" that we are dealing with when we walk with Him, not just a little bit of his power. Many believers have a sense that when God "moves" it is only a "little bit" of God's power that flashes out, but this verse, with many examples from church history point in the other direction. When we stand in the appointed place in the plan of God for us to serve we are in the place where the total required power of God can flow into any situation we face, and when you see it happen it is awesome indeed. This is to be a far more "normal" experience than it sadly is in the church, due to our lack of biblical application and our active disobedience most of the time.

God's power towards our preservation and ministry is not limited at all, and is exercised by the Holy Spirit and the Lord himself directly into the situations we face in accordance with "His mighty power", not our expectations. Our job is just to position ourselves in the place where God can work and stand back and see the deliverance of the Lord. God's people are often told to "Stand still and see the deliverance of the Lord". We need to stop at times and stand still before the Lord and pray quietly for the Lord's clear direction and expect his power to open the required doors. **Exodus 14:13, Numbers 9:8, Joshua 3:8, Psalms 4:4, 46:10**.

Verse 20 The greatest demonstration of power in man's history wasn't the parting of the Yam Suf (Sea of Reeds) before Moses and the children of Israel it was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sin was defeated on the Cross and death was defeated in the Garden Tomb when the Lord rose from the dead. The resurrection establishes the "good news" of the total victory. If there is no resurrection there is no Christianity. **1 Corinthians 15:16-22, 42-58, 2 Corinthians 13:3, Hebrews 8:1-5**. It is resurrection power that is available to us today, and in which we are to live. We serve a risen Saviour, who is indeed King of all kings and Lord of all lords, and is seated at the right hand of majesty on high.

In Acts 2:34ff we have Peter's great message at Pentecost. Here Peter says that Jesus Christ has been raised, ascended, and is now seated in heaven and then he quotes Psalm 110. He tells the judges of Israel who had condemned Jesus Christ as a criminal that God has made that man the ruler of the universe. Later in **Acts 7:55-60** Stephen looked up and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He is standing to accept Stephen into heaven. His accusers blocked up their ears because they did not want to hear that they were wrong.

Verse 21 There is some debate amongst theologians about the meaning of the ranks and titles here, but all are clear they refer to angelic rank; it is just that some don't want to recognize that the demons still exist let alone are organised. Even though the enemy forces are organised under "lords" of different ranks they are all out-ranked by the Lord and all are answerable to Him as final God and King over all. He is Lord over all, both now and forever; none of Satan's crowd can get near to his power or majesty and Satan himself is no match for him.

Remember the truth behind 1 John 4:4 and realize why we are all ordered to resist the devil. **James 4:7-10, 1 Peter 5:6-11**. When we stand in Christ's authority in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, he will flee, for we are in Christ, and Christ is with us, and He is the Lord of all. **Philippians 2:9-10, Colossians 2:10**. We do not ever have to stand in fear of satanic power, for it is inferior to the power available to the youngest and most foolish believer who is Holy Spirit filled.

Verse 22 "All things under His feet" is a phrase that goes back to **Psalm 8:3-6**. From this Psalm we see the psalmist singing of the immensity of the universe, and with him we are amazed that He is really lovingly concerned about man. Man is made a little lower than the angels but is destined to be higher than the angels. This is the destiny of man, and it is amazing, and it is all in and through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Psalms 4:4-8, Hebrews 2:5-10, Revelation 5:11-14**.

The Lord Jesus himself is our "head"; he is the ruler of the Church and the one to whom we look, not any man upon the earth. **Colossians 2:18-19**. We look to no-one else other than the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and our Lord. It is fellowship with the Lord that will keep us safe in difficult places, and provide the assurance of his love that will comfort in all places of loneliness. It is the practical outworking of fellowship with the Lord in the local churches that Ephesians is discussing. Paul will discus how this fellowship will work out in action locally as he goes through this letter, but to start he establishes the first principle of fellowship with the Lord; He is King, He is Lord of all, and He is the first in importance and the one we all look to for all things. **Romans 9:5, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 12:22-29**.

Verse 23 The church is His body, and with Christ as the head a major step in the plan of God is completed, and also a new phase begins. The church will replace Satan and the fallen angels on the Heavenly convocation with the fallen angels being ejected from heaven. This scene is given in **Revelation 12:7-10**, where Satan and the angels are cast onto the earth, and finally are judged, **Revelation 20:5ff**. This is why Satan hates saved mankind so much, for we have gained the place that he and his demons lost by their evil rebellion. Tragically for the lost Satan hates his own deceived people with equal malice!

Satan's loss is our gain, and as long as we walk spiritually armoured with the Lord, in vital union with him and in the filling of the Holy Spirit, we have nothing to fear from the total hatred of the enemy. It is total hatred remember, for Satan has lost everything, although he clings to the delusion that he can still win. His delusion aside, he has no power to hurt any believer who is obedient to the Lord and walking within the Plan utilizing God's spiritual provisions for them, but he has 100% malice towards us, and so we need our full spiritual armour on all the time. **Ephesians 6:10-18**.

APPLICATION – PERSONAL

Faith that is real will always work out in life, in love for the Lord that is expressed in worship towards God and practical acts of love towards the brethren. Faith that doesn't work out in practical signs of love is not real biblical faith. James 2:14-26.

In light of the biblical doctrines of election and predestination many stop praying for things and adopt a passive fatalism, but that is not the apostolic pattern. If the apostles who introduce these doctrines are always praying for things, so should we, or we have not understood them as they intended. Remember the more we look like the apostles the closer we are to the truth. Let us pray as they prayed, and as often as they prayed, and that was always.

Have we grasped the power of the great grace we have received from the Lord? Have we appreciated and praised the Lord for the wonders of grace that are ours? The riches of our inheritance, and the wonder of the present power we have available is awesome, and yet so little used and so little praised God for. Let us change that brethren by our passionate worship, witness and work.

APPLICATION – PASTORAL

Have we taught the "wonders of grace" as we ought to have pastors? Have we taught the Angelic Conflict to the level that we need to? I fear we have sold many of the Lord's people short on doctrine in these matters, for so few understand their superior position in Christ Jesus and just how much power we have in the Lord and through the Holy Spirit's power. It is the eternal life perspective that the Lord's people need to grasp – and they must hear it from us!

All things are under his feet now, and yet so often we preach in a manner that indicates there is some doubt about the power that we have available. In Christ Jesus we have all the power to withstand the devil and his demons and yet so many believers are frightened. Let us teach these truths and ensure the Lord's people are equipped and armed as they ought to be with the understanding of the Word that is required to defeat the enemy.

Philippians 2:1-11

2:1 "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies,"
2:2 "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."
2:3 "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."
2:4 "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."
2:5 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"
2:6 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:"
2:7 "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:"
2:8 "And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."
2:9 "Wherefore God has also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:"
2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;"
2:11 "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

KEY WORDS

if	ei	if and it is true
consolation	paraklesis	solace, exhortation, encouragement
comfort	paramuthion	comfort, consolation
love	agape	unconditional love
fellowship	koinonia	participation, fellowship, communion
bowels	splagchena	bowels, inward affection, emotions
mercies	oiktirmos	merciful compassion
fulfil	pleroo	[aorist active imperative] : to fill, to make full
joy	chara	joy
like-minded	phroneo	[present active subjunctive] : to mind the same thing
having	echo	[present active participle] : to have and to hold
love	agape	unconditional love
accord	sumpsuchos	joint-soul, accord
mind	phroneo	[present active participle] : to mind the same thing
strife	eritheia	contention, strife or quarrel
vainglory	kenodoxia	desire of vain glory, empty glory
lowliness	tapeinophrosune	lowliness of mind, humbleness
esteem	hegeomai	[present middle participle] : to think, consider, or regard.
better	huperecho	[present active participle] : to be above, to surpass,
themselves	heautou	of own self
look	skopeo	[present active participle] : to view, inspect
every man	hekastos	each
others	heteros	others of a different kind
let this mind	phroneotouto	to think or be of one mind
you	humin	to you
being	huparcho	[present active participle] :existing, subsisting
form	morphe	form, inner being
thought	hegeomai	to lead, account, esteem.
robbery	harpagmos	a snatching away

be	eimi	[present active infinitive] : to be
equal	isos	equal to, the same as
made	ginomai	[aorist middle participle] : to become something one was not before
reputation	kenoo	[aorist active indicative] : to empty
took	lambano	[aorist active participle] : taking
form	morphe	form
servant	doulos	slave
likeness	homoioma	something made like – with the essence of
found	heurisko	[aorist passive participle] : find
fashion	schema	scheme or outward appearance
humbled	tapeinoo	[aorist active indicative] : to make low
became	ginomai	[aorist middle participle] : to become something that one was not before
obedient	hupekoos	submissively
death	thantos	death
cross	stauros	stake
highly exalt	huperupsoo	[aorist active indicative] : to lift up above
given	charizomai	[aorist middle indicative] : to grant as a favour
name	onoma	name
knee	gonu	knee
bow	kampto	[aorist active subjunctive] : to bend
in heaven	epouranios	in heaven
in earth	epigeios	on earth, terrestrial
under the earth	katachthonios	belonging to the world of the departed spirits.
tongue	glossa	tongue, language
confess	exomologeo	[aorist middle subjunctive] : to speak out the same
Lord	kurios	lord, master
glory	doxa	glory
Father	pater	father, ancestor

REFLECTION

Verse 1 This verse has four first class conditional phrases in the Greek text. The first class conditional phrase can be translated, "If…and it is true…". To powerfully translate this verse correctly we could say, "There is, as you all know with absolute certainty, in Christ wonderful encouragement. There is Comfort in his love, there is Fellowship in the Holy Spirit, and there his deep mercy filled compassion in love for us all". These things are the "given truths" of our position "in Christ", and they must be affirmed aloud when we face pressure situations, so that the enemy hears our certainty of deliverance and our faith in the Holy Character of God towards us.

The word translated "consolation" means "encouragement, exhortation to advance, comfort under pressure that all will be well". It is a word able to be used of soldiers in the line of battle being urged by their Commanding Officer to face the enemy and stand with assurance against the demonic forces. **John 16:22-24, Romans 5:1-2, 15:12-16, 2 Corinthians 1:5-7, 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17, Hebrews 6:16-20, 1 Peter 1:6-9**. "Be assured" is our Commanding Officer's word to us, for he is with us forever, and we will be with him forever in glory; there is no reason for fear to grip our hearts. **Isaiah 12:2** applies!

The idea of "comfort of love" is very strong also. This word is best translated as "comfort-consolation under pressure, or when facing loss". It is literally "in (his) love". It is part of the encouragement of the soldier in the line facing the enemy, and is the Commanding Officer's reminder that his love for them all is such that any loss will be consoled and made right in the end. It is his love that guides every order he gives us, and so there can be no losses in following his orders that will not be made good a hundred fold, either in time or eternity. There are no tears in heaven. **Revelation 7:17, 21:4**. There are no unanswered questions and no sadness about what happened here on the earth, for all that saddened for a time is solved a hundred fold with blessing and glory. **John 15:10-15, Ephesians 4:30-32**.

The deepest need of mankind is genuine fellowship that satisfies the soul and gladdens the heart in dark places. I see people in my clinic every week who face the depressing power of loneliness, and the only powerful start point for their recovery is salvation and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit within, who can minister Jesus presence into their heart. **John 14:16-20, 16:7-15**. People will fail us at times but the Lord will never leave us nor forsake us. **Isaiah 41:17, 55:7, Hebrews 13:5-7.**

The last point of encouragement to challenge the Christian Soldier to stand firm against the demonic forces is the assurance that grace and mercy will continue towards them to meet every need in their life. God's deepest loving affection is towards us and our needs for affirmation, approval, acceptance, affiliation, and affection. The Lord's "great love wherewith he loved us", **Ephesians 2:4**, doesn't stop at salvation. We are now under the "much more" love of God. For if he loved us as sinners so much that he sent his Son to die for us, will he love us less now that we are his children? This has been called by some, "the logic of grace and mercy". **James 4:6**. Hear Paul's words in Romans 5.

Romans 5:8-11 *"8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.
10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.
11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Verse 2 "Fill up the reservoir of my joy right now!" Fill me with joy so that there isn't room for anything else! Whatever way we say it, catch Paul's earnest entreaty and indeed his most urgent order that they fill up his joy by working together in the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is the joy of every Holy Spirit filled pastor that his people serve the Lord in unity with the plan of the Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and the mutual love of the Lord Jesus for each of them. As we get the Lord's people to live and work as he did we get power flowing in the church, and it is that which fills up the godly pastor with joy. **John 3:27-29, 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, 7:4-7, 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20**.

Think the same things about Jesus! The subjunctive mood of the Greek verb reminds us that this instruction has potential in it, but they must make their choice to do it, and maybe they will and maybe they wont! We must make the choice to work together with our brethren and do so with joy in the Lord and unity of purpose in Christ Jesus. **1 Peter 3:8-9**. It is easy to agree in the Lord, for it requires only focused and passionate prayer together to seek the Lord's unity and focus forward for His service. Brethren, let the Holy Spirit do his work and bring you to "like mindedness".

Having the same love. Keep on having the same unconditional giving love that the Lord had towards you, and have it overflowing to others around you. Remember how the Lord loved you, and deal with others that way in Christ Jesus. Have one accord about what you are here on this temporary planet to achieve. Be focused upon the Lord's purposes, and have a joint spirit to achieve what the Lord wants, not what any men desire. "One mind" means unity in the way you think because you think in accordance with the doctrines of the Word of God. **Romans 12:1-2**. Transformation by the work of the Holy Spirit upon the Word is lasting and powerful transformation.

Romans 12:1-2 "1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
2. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Verse 3 Paul is serious and direct; "Let nothing be done in strife or pride!" The pathetic desire for glory that doesn't last afflicts many in our world, and they seek fame, power, money or the approbation of the rich or powerful. What fools they are, and yet so many believers get "hooked" by this addictive way of thinking. They value the opinion of people who will be food for worms, just like them a few years hence! The opinions of men are irrelevant, but the "well done, good and faithful servant", of the Lord is of eternal value and significance. **Matthew 25:21-23, 2 Thessalonians 3:13**.

It is always helpful to examine our motives and thoughts on a regular basis and ensure we are still "in the faith" area of thinking, and have not strayed into carnality. **2 Corinthians 13:5, 1 Corinthians 3:1-4, 2 Corinthians 10:4**. People who have a contentious spirit need to humble themselves before the Lord, for strife and empty quarrelling is always of the devil, never from God.

Whenever believers find themselves in a quarrel with another saint who loves the Lord, they must immediately get on their knees and pray themselves back into unity around the Word and the purpose of the Lord. It's embarrassing for believers to fight in the presence of the angels! The angels are always watching, as is the Lord – lets be dignified, as is right and proper for members of the Royal Family of Eternity! **1 Peter 2:9-12**.

"Vainglory" is an old English word, but it beautifully sums up the emptiness of the praises of men. There is only glory from God, never from men, for all that comes from men is passing as the wind. Instead of man's vainglory the believer is urged to seek a lowliness of mind that seeks to lift the Lord Jesus up. Instead of trying to lift yourself up, seek to lift up the ministries of all around you and let the Lord get the glory in all things. **1 Peter 5:5-10**. By blessing others you bless your own ministry, for the Lord lifts up the humble, but he humbles the proud. **Psalms 9:12, 10:17, Proverbs 3:1-8, 13:10, 16:18-19.**

Verse 4 Inspect each other's work for approval, not for small faults. Look at what others are doing and encourage and support them as you can see that the Lord is being praised and honoured by them. This verse does not encourage you or I to support so called "ministries" that do not honour the Lord, nor does it encourage us to support "make believers" who are "false brethren". We are told directly not to even greet those who claim to be believers but whose lives or belief systems are clearly unbiblical. The warnings against such people are strong, and we do not encourage others lightly or without discernment, but when we know a person or group are beloved brethren, let us be obedient and encourage them. **2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Galatians 2:4-5, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 17, 2 John 9-11**.

Verse 5 Paul lifts up our goal for this life and he does it clearly and simply. He desires of us what the Lord wants from us; that we might have Christ like minds, and think as Jesus thought. It is the humility of the Lord that gripped Paul, as he saw what the Lord had done as creator, and yet he became a creature, and entered his creation, even though it meant his own death on the Cross. **John 1:9-11, 14, 3:16-36**. We have the same choice that Satan had, and the same eternal outcomes.

Satan decided to allow pride to fill his heart, **Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:1-19**, and so he rebelled and set his heart after evil. Man may select the pride option also, and reject the claims of his creator, and those who embrace this choice enter also into evil, and join the demons on their path to the Lake of Fire. **Revelation 20:5-15**. The alternative to the satanic path of pride and death, is humility and servant-hood. There is no middle ground between them. We are either with the King of all kings and Lord of all lords, or we are with the prince of this world and at the very "untender" mercy of his demons. **John 12:27-33, 14:27-31, 16:7-15, Acts 4:12**.

Verse 6 This verse was the start point for one of the great Church History controversies about the nature of Christ. Is the Lord in his incarnation fully God and fully man, or does he just have the "form" of a man, or does he have limited divine attributes? One verse out of its context creates a pretext which will open the door to heresy. The early church believed strongly that God had stepped into history, and that the Lord was in some way, unknowable to us at this point, both fully God and fully man. These are the biblical doctrines of the "Kenosis" and the "Hypostatic Union" (both these concepts are to be studied in the doctrinal section of the BTB). These are both crucial doctrines for salvation, for only if the Lord is fully God and fully man can he be equal with both parties and so can win our salvation.

The Lord's nature is part of the divine plan to win salvation for man and overcome the eternal consequences of the sin of Adam. Only by the Lord being the unique person of the universe could he achieve the cancelling out of Adam's Sin and deliver salvation to mankind. The Lord's equality with the Father wasn't a matter of "attempted robbery", as Satan's had been, for the Lord Jesus was God from the beginning. He didn't need to be pride filled, just reality focused, for he was God, and always will be.

The great mystery of the incarnation is that in some way unexplainable to man at this point, the Lord Jesus Christ is now seated on the throne of heaven as a man! What Satan tried to do as the greatest of angelic beings, has been achieved by the Lord Jesus Christ as the inferior creature (lower than the angels). **Hebrews 2:5-18**. Can you see why Satan hates us believer? Read through the Hebrews section above again, and below, as I believe it is Paul's next explanation of what he is saying here in the Prison Epistles.

Hebrews 2:5-18.
"*5. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.*
6. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?
7. Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:
8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.
9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.
10. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,
12. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.
13. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.
14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
16. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.
17. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.
18. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

The great Angelic Conflict has the nature, future, and status of man at the centre of it. Satan, as the most superior creature ever made, fell through pride. He failed and was defeated and cast down to the earth. Man was then placed upon the earth, as an inferior creature to Satan and his demons. The big question behind this universe is the fairness of God in judging Satan and the demonic forces who all followed him in his rebellion. The "test case" is mankind, for if inferior man can accept the grace offer of salvation by faith, then Satan could have, and he too could have been saved himself through humility by faith. He would not!

Man's salvation proves that God is righteous and just in condemning Satan and all his billions of demonic forces, for if the inferior creature could be saved by faith, so could Satan have been. His persistent refusal to accept faith, grace and mercy leads to the Lake of Fire, and all mankind who have sided with him will join him there. The nature of Christ as fully man is a crucial part of this plan to execute justice upon all who stand against their maker.

Verse 7 The Lord emptied himself of the prerogatives of deity to achieve his goals within the divine plan for man's salvation. The Lord still was fully God, but to win our salvation he had to with-hold certain attributes so as to achieve the Cross and Resurrection. An example of this would be his glory, which if it flashed forth would have evaporated the earth.

The disciples got a glimpse of this on the Mount of Transfiguration and it blew them away! **Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:1-10, Luke 9:27-36**. His glory flashed out again in the Garden of Gethsemane as he was about to be arrested, and it caused the entire company of soldiers to fall over backwards. The Lord's point here was that he could have resisted their arresting him. **Matthew 26:47-56, John 18:4-11**. Refer to the BTB study on "Kenosis" to follow up.

He became a servant as a man, and a servant to man. This is the heart of the doctrines of the "Hypostatic Union" and the "Kenosis", namely their application to our own mental attitude. That has been Paul's theme throughout the letter and will remain so. He is teaching about the Christian soldier's mental attitude in Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians. He wants us to see that while he can be their mentor in these things, **Philippians 3:12-19**, The Lord Jesus Christ is our mentor in servant-hood. We are to see that the call of the Lord is to service for mankind by delivering them the truth about their Saviour and the truth about the only significance that their life can have, as his servant, and he is our servant.

Remember, even memorise, the following key texts that amplify these principles:
Matthew 6:25- 34 "25. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?
26. Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?
27. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?
28. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:
29. And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?
31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32. (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Matthew 20:20-28 "20. Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.
21. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.
22. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? They say unto him, We are able.
23. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.
24. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.
25. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.
26. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;
27. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:
28. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

John 13:1-17 "1. Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.
2. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;
3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;
4. He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.
5. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.
6. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?
7. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.
8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.
9. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.
10. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.
11. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.
12. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?
13. Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.
14. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.
15. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.
16. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.
17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Verse 8 Having taken the outward body of a man, he resembled an ordinary man in all respects, and so he was despised by many as just "an upstart man", claiming more than he was entitled to claim. It is interesting to reflect that the followers of Satan were the ones who accused the humble Lord of glory of arrogance! The Lord's most cutting attacks were upon these pious hypocrites for their evil, for they were truly satanic men. **Matthew 23:13-29**. The Lord was attacked for making the claim that he was God, and yet he was, and yet he also humbled himself more than any other man and submitted to the Cross. **John 8:48-59**.

The Lord proves himself to be superior to all angels, as a man, by his humility on the Cross and so is lifted up, in his humanity, to heavenly places as ruler of the Universe as the God-Man. He had always been ruler as God, but now as Man he sits on the throne! Satan's doom is sealed, and so is the doom of all demons and men and women who have been deceived into following him. **Hebrews 4:14-16, 8:1-3, 9:27-28, 10:10-22**.

Verse 9 The Lord as God-Man is exulted above all who were made. As God he was the creator, but as God-Man he is exulted through his battlefield victory over sin and death. This is too hard for us to fully understand now, but Paul urges the Philippians to rejoice in the mystery now and rejoice later in heaven when all is seen "face to face". He has already spoken about how hard it is to understand all these things to the Corinthians. **1 Corinthians 13:12**. We can get a glimpse now of these realities, and that is all we need to praise his name and rejoice in his victory, and share the fruits of that victory in our lives here and now, and then forever. **Acts 4:12, 16:31, Ephesians 1:17-23**.

Verse 10 The end of the plan of God is absolutely certain, and it is the final and full victory of the Lord over all demons and all fallen mankind, and the restoration of his lordship over all the creation itself until a new one is made by him to replace this whole tired old universe. **2 Peter 3:10-18, Revelation 20:1- 22:20**. Note the verses closely, for the certainty is that "every knee shall bow". There is no doubt at all, for all angelic knees and all human knees will bow. We and the elect angels bow now in joy, but all the fallen angels will bow and fall into the lake of fire, and all evil people will bow in fear and hopelessness at the last judgment for them, and join their demonic co-haters of God.

None will raise any objections that are raised by arrogant men now about why they are justified in rejecting Jesus. At the "Great White Throne Judgement" there will be no-one who does not bow their knee. All will know, but too late for salvation, that they were 100% wrong in all things relating to Jesus. **Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 20:10-15.**

Verse 11 Everyone will confess aloud that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. There will be no dissenters that day, for all will be required to tell the truth, and all deception will be swept away forever. The demons now know that Jesus is Lord and they tremble, **James 2:19-20**, but they still deceive and lie to man, but in that final day all deception is over and fallen angels and fallen men must accept what they have refused to accept in time. Jesus is indeed Lord and King, and he will be worshipped throughout all eternity, in joy by all who have stood in the truth through time. Revelation 21-22.

APPLICATION – PERSONAL

Be encouraged believer. Be encouraged on the basis of God's Loving Care for you. Be encouraged to stand firm against the demonic forces here and now, in the power he gives in the filling of the Holy Spirit, and in the assurances we gain from the promises of God's Holy Word.

It is a truly stupid thing to be proud in the presence of God. Let us be careful of pride and arrogance relating to others. Let us humble ourselves and lift up others, so that our promotions come from the Lord alone.

Be of one mind with your brethren so that you might all join together and be focused upon the Lord alone.

Encourage your genuine brethren in the Lord in their work at all times you are able to do so. Look for ways to build up others in their ministry to honour the Lord. Do not seek to lift yourself up, but let the Lord do that as you honour him and seek opportunity to bless others.

Humility is the test for mankind. Will we accept our creaturely nature and submit to the Creator our Saviour? Will we join the Lord Jesus Christ in his humility, or will we stand, for a time, with Satan in his arrogance, and then join him in the Lake of Fire forever?

APPLICATION – PASTORAL

Pastors, let us ensure the Lord's people under our care know the "logic of grace and mercy" by heart. Let us ensure that they see and hear the love of God in our churches every week.

The Hypostatic Union and the Kenosis are difficult concepts for space-time limited men to understand but they are crucial for the believer to have a concept of. Our own acceptance of our humanity depends upon understanding why we are here as men upon the earth, and it all centres round these doctrines. Understanding the Angelic Conflict, and seeing why the Lord's incarnation was as it was, is very helpful to ministry and focus for the active believer. Pastors, we must teach these things and teach them well.

Let us teach with power the truths that correct men's arrogance and so convict all of their sin in rejecting their Saviour and Lord. The truth alone will save man and the truth alone will deliver him from the deception and temporal power of satanic forces. The truth will set us all free, and so let us teach it as often as we can.

Colossians 2:14-19

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and <u>took it out</u> of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

KEY WORDS

Blotting	exaleipho	aorist, active, participle – washing/wiping out, cancelling a debt.
Handwriting	cheirograpon	handwriting on a papyrus acknowledging debt (IOU).
Ordinances	dogma	decree made regarding us, a legal obligation
Against/contrary	upernantios	hostile, actively against us.
Took out…	**airo**	**perfect, active, indicative – completely has taken away from us.**
Nailing it	proseloo	aorist, active, participle – having already nailed it.
Spoiled	apekduomai	aorist, middle, participle – having stripped off their garments.
Shew of them	deigmatizo	aorist, active, indicative – he displayed them as trophies.
Triumphing	thriambeuo	aorist, active, participle – he has been leading them in triumph.
Judge	krino	present, active, imperative – never let any judge you!
Holyday	eorte	festival to the gods, or proper Israelite festival.
Shadow	skia	shadow thrown on the wall from a light in another place.
To come	mello	present, active, participle – things about to come.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Verse 14 Ancient papyrus pages could be reused, and between the two uses a wet sea sponge was taken and the previous writing sponged away, but never completely. The papyrus sheet was then over written. A faint impression of the earlier manuscript could sometimes be seen and with modern technology read again, but in the ancient world it was gone. The same technique was used of debts written on papyrus ledgers; the debt when paid was sponged/wiped away and the debt cancelled.

It is this image of sponging away of a record that Paul uses to draw attention to the Colossians that their old life and all its sins and foolishness is wiped away by God (perfect tense) and will never be recalled again. **Ephesians 2:10-16**.

All the decrees of judgment that could ever be written against their old lives in sin are gone forever. **Psalms 103:7-18**. They don't need to undertake any "penance" or special rituals to feel cleansed, for all such things are a nonsense, for their sins are literally wiped away by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on their behalf. There is nothing left to atone for. All of our sins were in effect "nailed to his cross" and were covered by his blood shed. Not only our sins but the sins of the entire world are covered by his work, none is exempt. As we have seen already in **Revelation 20:10-15** the sins of men are not mentioned at the last judgment, for they are all paid for, only their rejection of the Lord is the issue, for then they must prove by their works that what they have done is equal to what Jesus did. If they have rejected him it can only be because they believed they didn't need his help, so they must stand alone, and they are in bad company – for that is Satan's position and they join him for that reason!

Verse 15 The very powers of the angelic forces were also defeated on the Cross, for the Lord has achieved, in carrying the sin burden of mankind, something that no angel could do, nor any angel could stop him doing. The cross and empty tomb are absolute triumphs over anything that Satan could throw at the Lord and the fallen angels were powerless to stop it, and the elect angels could only rejoice in his victory. It was a total demonstration of the power and position of the lord as King and Lord of all.

It was also a demonstration that the angels have nothing to add or subtract from his work. There is nothing that any angel can do except serve the believer, or stay out of our spirit-filled way!

Refer to the doctrinal study above on “Angels” and remind yourself that the elect angels are servants to believers and the fallen angels (demons) are enemies, but by walking in spiritual armour daily and filled in the Spirit, they are no danger at all. **1 John 4:4**.

Paul uses the image of the Roman Triumph to illustrate Jesus victory at the Cross. We cannot see this actually from our place in space and time, but pause and reflect upon what it means. Paul indicates that something happened after the Cross that is dramatic eternally, and occurred in the heavenlies and absolutely demonstrated his victory to all the angelic host – both fallen and divine. The Roman general who was granted the right to a triumphal procession was able to march in full regalia, weapons openly displayed, through the streets with his captives publicly humiliated, in order to be mocked by the victor’s people.

In Jesus case the enemies defeated were sin and death, and in some way the Lord publicly in heaven mocked both forces that had held man captive from Eden until that point. While death still rules over fallen mankind death is simply the doorway to heaven now for all believers, and sin is defeated by confession, not sacrifices and rituals. **John 8:51-52, 58, Acts 7:55-56**. This verse refers to something that we will only fully see in heaven itself, but a wonderful parade was held to celebrate the victory of the Cross.

Verse 16 If all has been won, why are these people still acting as if rituals and rules are required to meet the requirement for salvation and sanctification? They have had falsehood added to their walk and it adds nothing except nonsense, and dangerous nonsense at that. They don't need to agonize about food, practice vegetarianism, or abstain from wine or milk, or any other thing. As Jesus had pointed out, it’s not what goes into a man that defiles him but what comes out by way of lips and life witness. **Matthew 15:8-20**.

No rituals or dietary changes will do anything except change the physical; they have no impact upon the spiritual. Even though the Israelites were to keep their Sabbaths and New Moon festivals in their communities, in the church age the traditional/cultural rules were changed and all days were to be treated as “Sabbaths” as unto the Lord. Refer to the doctrinal study “Sabbath and the Lord’s Day” in the BTB to follow this study up. We are free in Christ Jesus from all the old traditions.

Verse 17 All the old Mosaic and Ezra based rules of traditional Judaism were to be laid aside for they had done their job, they had brought the Jewish people and all mankind to recognize the Messiah. Having had the Messiah come the focus was to be upon Him, not upon the rituals that spoke of him and prepared the people for his coming. The letter to the Hebrews would fully expound on this subject a few years later, but Paul introduces the theme here, built upon in Hebrews 8:1ff especially. The Old Testament was the shadow of the reality to come, and once the reality has come you don't hug the shadow! It pictured the beloved and all he would do, but once the beloved has arrived you stop focusing on the picture you centre your life in Him!

What would we think of any person who was kissing their partner’s photo when they were sitting beside them on the sofa? To return to Jewish traditions, or to seek other nation’s rituals to try to reach the Lord when he has already arrived is a terrible waste of time and effort. It is this time wasting nature of paganism and cabalism and all the other “isms” that Paul is mocking here. He wants the Colossians to see that their theology is a time wasting exercise in futility and stupidity. They have been conned into a path that leads nowhere, not even effectively backwards to Moses (as the Galatians had been years before). **Hebrews 8:1, 9:9, 10:1**.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

We were children of sin, doomed to never escape the power of sin and death and he has taken it all away and nailed it to his cross. What ought to be our daily response? What is our response? Do we worship daily as we ought to? Do we praise the Lord as often as we ought to? Have we got distracted by rituals that belong in another age, or are actually pagan in origin? Let us ruthlessly cut away all nonsense out of our lives and churches.

Have we been captured by fake rituals and little “add ons” to faith that are actually serious distractions? God does not want us distracted by pretty and yet useless rituals and activities; the Lord calls us to Holy Spirit filled and fruitful behaviours that minister Christ’s love to a needy world. All that stops us ministering is a distraction and it needs to be kicked away from our life and timetable. The angels are watching – are we in tune with the Plan, or behind the times we live in? Out of step people are sitting ducks for the Devil’s team.

B. PASTORAL

Pastors let us be careful of pleasant rituals and "enhancements" to worship services that are actually time wasting nonsense getting people away from bible teaching and genuine worship that will draw them closer to Christ. Any and every action that does not lead people on in maturity or forward in intimate relationship is to be kicked out of the church, before it destroys the spiritual power of the church.

We are here to train believers for service, not entertain them while they march towards a pointless death. We are not here to make church services entertaining or cultural events, but to seriously and strongly preach the truth at every opportunity and train believers so that they stand and win in the angelic conflict. They must be ready to fight and win in the angelic conflict and we are tasked by the Lord to prepare them for battle, not entertain them with rituals!

CONCLUSION

Whose power will we use to live in this life, and what path do we walk upon? If we utilize the power of men we get what men can do but of we walk with Christ in the filling of the Holy Spirit we get what God can do. It is our daily choice and Paul urges the Colossians to walk with God.

PARAPHRASE

"He cancelled the sin debt against us, sponging away/wiping out the legal judgment against us. It was there accusing us constantly, and he took it completely out of our way and nailed it to his cross. And having stripped the demonic forces of all their false regal authority in total victory over them, he made total triumph over them, leading them as captives in his triumphal parade. Let no man therefore judge you in respect of any food you eat or drink that you partake of, nor in any "holy days" that you keep or do not keep, nor regarding new moon festivals, nor Sabbath days. All these things, where legitimate, were but shadows of the reality that was to come in Christ's Advent."

WARNING AGAINST FALSE SPIRITUALITY AND MYSTICISM – COLOSSIANS CHAPTER 2:18-19

18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

KEY WORDS

Beguile	katabrabeuo	present, active, imperative – let no-one decide against you! Defraud you of the athletic prize by false judgment.
Reward	concept included in the previous word.	
Humility	tapeinophrosune	voluntary lowliness/humility associated with asceticism.
Worshipping	threskeia	acting out worshipful rituals.
Angels	aggelos	holy messengers – elect or possibly "fallen" angels.
Intruding	embateuo	present, active, participle – entering into spirit experiences.
Seen	**orao**	**perfect, active, indicative – have not seen with eternal results.**
Vainly puffed	eike + phusioo	present, passive, participle – being blown up with pride.
Holding	krateo	present, active, participle – keeping holding in power.
Nourishment	epichorageo	present, passive, participle – receiving all that is required to work.
Ministered	concept included in previous verb	
Knit together	sumbibazo	present, passive, participle – received the knitting together
Increaseth	auxei	present, active, indicative – keeps on increasing with the..
Increase	auxesis	increase of God.

REFLECTION

Verse 18 The "Beware" message is given strongly again. They have been conned, defrauded, tricked and delivered a product that delivers nothing except time wasting delay and distortion of truth. All these things are "fruit/evidence" of the demonic team, not God's team.

The "poisoned" package delivered is religious and appears very humble, spiritual and thoughtful, but it is 180 degrees from humble. It "puffs people up" in pride and self importance, and like all satanic religious operations it appeals to human pride and arrogance.

It is marketed cleverly as a traditional Jewish approach that appeals in its rituals to the beliefs and background of the people but it is wrong. It does not deliver anything of value at all except a pleasant and pointless religious experience! How much of today's "religion" is in this category? It doesn't matter how "lovely" a ritual is, we must ask whether it builds faith or erodes it and replaces reality with fantasy. In Paul's day the worship was shifted from Jesus to the angels and they were being worshipped or prayed to as "intermediaries". Those teaching this rubbish have not "seen" the truth, and the results are eternal and fatal for them!

As Paul has noted strongly, the Lord acted so that no intermediary is needed, for the Lord has won the spiritual battle, and is well able to hear all our prayers and answer them. These false teachers had developed a "package" to make them feel important but it was fake and useless. It appealed to their pride and was rooted in the same self centeredness that will have Satan in the Lake of Fire. We must hate all such pride based operations and go only for things that build up spiritual faith. A time wasting believer is another casualty in the angelic conflict!

Verse 19 All religion is based on distortion, distraction and deviation from living faith. God calls us to a real relationship with Christ as our "head" and our source of all authority and power for our life. We are not to waste time and energy on play acting a false concept of religion. It is centering life in and around Christ that brings us close to truth, not any ritualistic and magical nonsense. We must select whether we are built up in and through the person and power that Jesus gives, or whether we build up our life around man's philosophy and man's energy. Always ask of all teaching - Is it grace based or is it human viewpoint?

If Christ is the centre we get what God can do with us, but if it is some religious system then we get what that system can produce. God wants us to have better than that! The Lord has provided all spiritual resources to produce unity of purpose and focus forward in each church. It is the Lord's power through the Holy Spirit that empowers a church and brings believers together in real and sustainable unity of purpose. Nothing else produces fellowship and unity, and so nothing else is to be allowed to intrude into the church. Doctrine and practice is to be kept pure and biblical. The only alternative to the truth will always be a lie!

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Don't be conned believer into anything that isn't biblical. That means you must know your bible and apply the truths in it. Recognize that there are many religious fraudsters out there who try to get believers side tracked and may do it for various reasons. Some do it for money, other to feel "special" themselves, and others just because they have malice and like to play with others lives. Whatever their motivation they are to be avoided, by simply avoiding all non-biblical behaviours. Anything that leads us away from closeness with Christ is to be shunned as the poison it is, for religion is eternally fatal.

B. PASTORAL

Pastor, are you teaching the Word of God simply and powerfully enough? Our call is to be thorough and powerful but most of all biblical. We have no license to stray a millimetre from the Word of God, for its truths alone protect believers from dangers in the angelic conflict. We must warn the believers against con artists and fraudsters who will trick them into nonsense. Anything that draws us away form the Lord is to be shunned and actively opposed, for it disables a soldier of the Lord and opens the door for satan's team to deceive, distract and distort from truth another person.

CONCLUSION

Hold the "head" of the church as the centre of your life, and the head of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ. Hold your living daily fellowship with the Lord as the dearest thing to you and pray often through the day, seeking every moment to draw closer and closer to Him.

PARAPHRASE

"Do not allow anyone to pretend to make fraudulent decisions against you regarding your eternal rewards, by conning you into fake humility through worship rituals for angelic beings. They are entering into spiritual realms that they can know nothing surely of. They are filled with hot air and obsessive with their own human viewpoint. They are not clinging in power to their true head, (the Lord Jesus Christ), for it is from him alone that the whole church body is bound together joint and sinew. In the church we receive from the Lord all spiritual nourishment we need, and are knitted together, and increase in power and ministry by the increase that God gives."

REMEMBER!!!!

Believer - Expect the enemy to increase deception as the days darken towards the end.

Jesus asked, "Will I find faith on the earth?" Answer expected – "No – not much". **Luke 18:8**

Deceptions will increase – we have God's Word on that – lets ensure we are not casualties.

OTHER MAJOR DOCTRINES

FUNDAMENTALISM – The Basic Standard for the Historic Christian Faith

1. Fundamentalism requires belief in the following "fundamentals of the apostolic faith":-
   a) The deity of Christ and the virgin birth
   b) The miracles of Christ
   c) The cross of Christ on which He paid for the sins of the world as God's efficacious substitutionary sacrifice
   d) The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ
   e) The certainty of the yet to come Second Coming of the Lord for His church and to judge the lost
   f) The inerrancy of the Bible as the Word of God

2. False teachers and liberal theologians will distort all or some of these principles.

3. Refer below to the Bible Topic Book Doctrines on all of Satan's Strategies and Tactics towards the lost and towards the saved.

LAST DAYS – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS

Just as world conditions just before the flood indicated judgement was overdue so conditions now show that we are at the end of the "last days" before the Lord's return for the Church and the final act of the Devil – his Anti-Christ figure.

As we draw close to the end – when the Lord's return is close – people will be more and more distracted by the satanic "Cosmos Philosophy. The fruit of that deception are seen as:
1. Preoccupation with physical appetites - **Luke 17:27**
2. Massively distracting preoccupation with technology - **Genesis 4:22**
3. Grossly materialistic attitudes and interests - **Luke 17:28**
4. Uniformitarian attitudes and interests - **Hebrews 11:7, 2 Peter 3:1-5**
5. Inordinate devotion to pleasure and comfort - **Genesis 4:21**
6. No concern for God in either belief or conduct - **2 Peter 2:5, Jude 15**
7. Disregard for the sacredness of the marriage relationship - **Matthew 24:38**
8. Rejection of the inspired Word of God - **1 Peter 3:19**
9. Population explosion - **Genesis 6:1,11**
10. Widespread violence - **Genesis 6:11, 13**
11. Corruption throughout society - **Genesis 6:12**
12. Preoccupation with illicit sexual activity - **Genesis 4:19; 6:2**

13. Widespread words and thoughts of blasphemy - **Jude 15**
14. Organised Satanic activity - **Genesis 6:1-4**
15. Promotion of systems and movements of abnormal depravity - **Genesis 6:5, 12**

LAST DAYS – DENIALS THAT CHARACTERISE THE END TIME CHURCH

1. Denial of God. **(Luke 17:26; 2 Timothy. 3:1-5)**
2. Denial of Christ. **(1 John 2:18, 4:3; 2 Peter. 2:1)**
3. Denial of Christ's return. **(2 Peter 3:3-4)**
4. Denial of the Faith. **(1 Timothy 4:1-2; Jude 3)**
5. Denial of Sound Doctrine. **(2 Timothy 4:3-4)**
6. Denial of Separated Life (Practical Sanctification. **2 Timothy 3:1-7**)
7. Denial of Christian Liberty. **(1 Timothy 4:3-4)**
8. Denial of Spirituality. **(2 Timothy 3:1-8; Jude 18)**
9. Denial of Authority. **(2 Timothy 3:4)**

SATAN'S LAST GREAT PUSH TO DESTROY MANKIND – THE ANTI-CHRIST

This man will sum up to evil "perfection" all the malice and self deception that characterizes his master Satan. This man will be the complete embodiment of Evil, as Christ was the complete sum of God's Goodness. Christ was truly Immanuel, the Anti-Christ will literally be "The Beast" – Satan's malice will be writ large and full in him!

The Anti-Christ will be Satan's best tool to manipulate other unbelievers into thinking Satan can win against God, and that total obedience to Anti-Christ will be part of that final battle of unsaved mankind to defeat the hated Jesus and all He stood for! As Jesus was in his humanity totally obedient to the Father's will, so the Anti-Christ will be chosen by Satan to be totally obedient to his will, and this man will open his heart, mind and body to demonic possession to receive all the power that Satan can give.

We are called to have minds transformed by the Word of God, totally remade by the work of the Holy Spirit, so that we become transformed from within by the "mind of Christ". **Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Ephesians 4:23, Philippians 2:2-5, 4:2-20, 1 Peter 3:3-9**. Just so the Anti-Christ will be totally transformed by satanic thinking and the doctrines of demons so that he is the perfect image of the Cosmos System, and epitomizes "worldliness" in all its powerful deceptive appeal and malicious self centred carnage.

He will rule for a time, but even in the Tribulation Period of world history, he does not have it all his own way, and nation after nation and many people groups rebel against him! Satan is a narcissist and so "team work" and cooperation/obedience is not his strong suit!

ANTICHRIST

1. SCRIPTURE - **Daniel 7:8,21-26; 8:23-25; 9:26,27; 11:36-45; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 13:1-18; 17:16,17; 19:19,20.**

2. BIOGRAPHY

The Antichrist is the world ruler who will emerge as a violently anti-God despot, who will emerge after the removal of God's church. He comes from the Gentile nations (the sea) in the last times. He emerges and his power base will be a ten nation empire closely related to the old Roman Empire known by many as the Revived Roman Empire, but in Daniel it is the feet of ceramic clay and iron baked together – with fatal weaknesses.

The Antichrist is very clever and infiltrates by means of a peace campaign. He is, however, very hungry for power and once he wrests power from his subjects, he destroys the apostate religious system, which has been working closely with him until then. He makes a covenant with Israel, allowing them to sacrifice in the the re built temple, but eventually sets himself up to be worshipped as the visible manifestation of God in that temple. His reign of almost seven years duration becomes increasingly and openly anti-God, involving signs and wonders. He has a close relationship with the person called "the false prophet", the religious leader of Israel at that time.

At the end of his empire he moves on Jerusalem, which is by then being held by rebels against him - believers. Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent to deliver those in Jerusalem and capture the Antichrist and false prophet, throwing them into the lake of fire.

3. EVALUATION

a) The Antichrist arises out of the Gentile nations with the final empire of ten nations **(Revelation 13:1).**
b) The seven heads are seven mountains which speaks of Rome **(Revelation 17:9)**.
c) There are seven kings: five are fallen, one is, and one is to come **(Revelation 17:10)**. These are empires - the five that are fallen are Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Persia and Greece. The one in existence in 96 AD (when John wrote Revelation) was Rome, and the one to come is the Revived Roman Empire.
d) The ten horns are ten future kingdoms which receive power for a short time. **(Revelation 17:12)**.
e) He rules empires **(Revelation 13:2; cf. Daniel 7:4-6).**
f) His power is from Satan **(Revelation 13:2; cf. Revelation 20:2)**.
g) Satan gives Antichrist the world empire **(Revelation 13:2)**.
h) Satanic worship is a key part of Antichrist's regime **(Revelation 13:4,8)**.
i) He is a great orator. He is anti-God and has power for 3 1/2 years **(Revelation 13:5)**.
j) His empire becomes a world empire **(Revelation 13:7)**.
k) The dictator of Palestine who is demon possessed ("the false prophet") promotes him **(Revelation 13:11)**.
l) Great wonders and miracles are a feature of this empire **(Revelation 13:13).**
m) A statue of the Antichrist is constructed. It has the ability to speak. Worship of it is compulsory on the pain of death **(Revelation 13:14,15).**
n) The Antichrist controls the world economy by marking members of the human race on the forehead or on the right hand **(Revelation 13:16,17; cf. Revelation 14:9-11)**.
o) His number is 666, a number which represents "perfect man" or "perfect sin" **(Revelation 13:18)**.
p) He will not be revealed until the restrainer is removed **(2 Thessalonians 2:3-7)**
q) The Antichrist's rule features power, signs and lying wonders from Satan himself **(2 Thessalonians 2:9)**.
r) He deceives the unbeliever **(2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)**.
s) The Antichrist is destroyed and thrown into the lake of fire at the second advent **(Revelation 19:19,20)**.

4. PRINCIPLES

a) Satan is the present ruler of this planet through his cosmos/world system **(Matt 4, Luke 4, John 16:11)**.
b) World domination and internationalism is Satanic in origin **(Genesis 11:6-9)**.
c) Miracles, signs and lying wonders are strategies employed by Satan to deceive **(John 8:44)**.
d) Economic control of the individual enslaves that individual **(Proverbs 22:7)**.
e) Ultimately vast power creates the delusion that the person in control is God **(Genesis 3:5; Isaiah 14:13,14).**
f) The antichrist will not be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church when the Holy Spirit who restrains him (and indwells all Christians) will be removed from the world **(2 Thessalonians 2:3-7)**
g) A few years of power is not worth an eternity of suffering.
h) Eventually man must account to Jesus Christ as his judge if he does not accept Jesus Christ as Saviour **(Revelation 20:12-15)**.
i) At a point, people become so hardened to God that God gives them over to their own delusions **(2 Thessalonians 2:11, Romans 1:28).**
j) The Antichrist is a person, not to be confused with the many antichrists of **(1 John 2:18)** or the "spirit of antichrist" of **(1 John 4:3).**

5. In the Tribulation there will be a counterfeit trinity with Satan (father), the Antichrist (son) and False Prophet (spirit).

6. Names given to the Antichrist through scripture are:-

a) The seed of Satan **(Genesis 3:15)**
b) The little horn **(Daniel 7:8)**
c) The king of fierce countenance **(Daniel 8:23)**
d) The prince that shall come **(Daniel 9:26)**
e) The desolater **(Daniel 9:27)**
f) The willful king **(Daniel 11:36)**
g) The man of sin **(2 Thessalonians 2:3)**
h) The son of perdition **(2 Thessalonians 2:3)**
i) The lawless one **(2 Thessalonians 2:8)**
j) The Antichrist **(1 John 2:22)**
k) The beast **(Revelation 11:7)**

7. Characteristics

a) He is called the seed of Satan (**Genesis 3:15**). Just as Jesus Christ had a supernatural birth being born of a virgin, it may be that there will be something supernatural about the birth of the Antichrist. It is likely that Satan will impregnate a human woman and thus be the father of the Antichrist in a similar way to the angelic infiltration of **Genesis 6:2**, but it may also be a "born again" demonic possession that transforms him into one who appears "god like" in deceptive power.

b) In (**Daniel 9:26**) he is said to be of the people who destroyed the Temple. The Roman Empire destroyed the Temple in 70 AD. The Antichrist may therefore be of Roman origin.

c) The identity of the man of sin will not be clear until the start of the Tribulation, although he may be fairly prominent in politics prior to that period. He will not be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church when the Holy Spirit who restrains him (and indwells all Christians) will be removed from the world (**2Thessalonians 2:3-7**). In the middle of the Tribulation, he sets himself in the Temple calling himself God (v4-8).

d) In (**Daniel 9:27**) the start of the Tribulation is marked by the signing of a seven year covenant between the Antichrist and the nation of Israel. When Israel signs the covenant, God issues a decree of destruction against the whole earth (**Isaiah 28:14-22**) - the judgments of the book of Revelation. The Antichrist is shown as the rider on the white horse of (**Revelation 6:1**) who brings the promise of (false) peace.

e) The rise of the Antichrist to power:-

i) In (**Daniel 8:23-25**) he is seen as a skilful leader, involved in the occult power (v23), will war against the Jews (v24), and will rise to power through deceit (v25).

ii) In (**Daniel 11:36-39**) he shall do what he wants, claiming to be God and exalting himself (v36), he will repudiate all religious practices from his ancestors (v37). He however will honour a god whom his ancestors did not know (v38) who assists him to power (v39), this god being Satan. He will accept the offer of the kingdoms of the world which our Lord refused in the wilderness.

iii) In (**2 Thessalonians 2:8-9**) we are told that his coming is according to the energising of Satan accompanied by miracles, signs and wonders.

iv) During the first half of the Tribulation, he gains political control of the ten groups that make up a One World Government. This includes the removal of three of the ten leaders (**Daniel 7:23-24, Revelation 17:12-17**)

v) He also destroys the One World Church ("Mystery Babylon") that has operated in the first half of the Tribulation (**Revelation 17:5,16.**) In (**Revelation 11**) he is able to kill the two witnesses who have been causing him major problems. They however will be resurrected much to his dismay.

f) The death and resurrection of the Antichrist .In (**Daniel 11:40-45**) he kills the Kings of the North, South and East. and in (v 45) he will come to his end and none shall help him. However in (**Revelation 13:3**) he receives a fatal wound but the fatal wound is healed. This suggests that the Antichrist dies and is resurrected by the power of Satan. This miracle deceives the world that the Antichrist is god and the world now worships him.

NIMROD – INTERNATIONALISM – (The first of the "dry runs" that Satan has of an "Anti-Christ" type figure)

1. SCRIPTURE **Genesis 10:8,9; 1 Chronicles 1:10**.

2. BIOGRAPHY

Great grandson of Noah through Ham and Cush. He was probably very dark in complexion as the Cushites were the original Ethiopians. Nimrod is said to be a great warrior before the Lord (**Genesis 10:8,9**). Nimrod had an extensive kingdom, including the great cities of Babel (Babylon), Erech (Warka), Accad (Agade), Calneh and all the land of Shinar. This was the location of the tower of Babel. Hamurabbi, the great law-giver who lived about the time of Abraham, rebuilt the tower of Babel. He dedicated it to Nimrod (Marduk), the original builder. The tower was one of the wonders of the ancient world at this time and a focal point for internationalism. Nimrod's extensive empire and strength combined to make him a formidable leader and conceivably the first world ruler after the flood. Nimrod's land also included inner Assyria, called the land of Nimrod in **Micah 5:6**, between Nineveh and Calah.

3. EVALUATION: **Genesis 9.**

a) The whole world after the Ark landed on Ararat was of one language and speech (verse 1).

b) After wandering for some while, they came to the plain of Shinar and dwelt there (verse 2).
c) God had told them to multiply and inhabit the earth (**Genesis 9:7**).
d) Man, however, remained centralised in the plain of Shinar where they constructed a tower (verses 3,4).
e) The purpose of the tower was to reach heaven from the earth and to rebel against God's orders (verse 4).
f) God recognised that the whole of mankind had concentrated, and such concentration would cause severe problems for their future (verses 5,6).
g) He causes a myriad of languages to come upon man to force them into national units (verse 7).
h) With the various languages, the people on the plain of Shinar disperse and migrate to fill the earth (verse 8).
i) The name of the place was called Babel because of the confusion of languages (verse 9).

4. PRINCIPLES
a) Concentration of power causes oppression and degeneracy **(Revelation 13:16-18)**.
b) God promotes nationalism and judges internationalism. There is no such thing as the brotherhood of man. Man is divided into two groups: believers who are children of God **(Romans 8:14-17)**, and unbelievers who are children of the devil **(John 8:44)**.
c) God confused tongues (languages) at the Tower of Babel. God gave the gift of tongues in the early church to give the gospel in foreign languages **(1 Corinthians 12-14)**.
d) Man is always attempting by his own works to pull God down from heaven. God judges man's works and will not allow man to operate outside His plan **(Numbers 22-24)**.
e) Babel and the Church:
i) Started in unity - the church started in unity being in one place in one accord **(Acts 2:1)**.
ii) Ambition for power - a power struggle commenced in the church with several bishoprics attempting to gain supreme power (**1 Peter 5:3**).
iii) Man-made unity - under the medieval papacy the church was one over a large area of the known world with one language, LATIN. Religious internationalism.
iv) Confusion of languages - the reformation caused each country to worship and have the Bible in their own languages. Christian nationalism.

PROPHECY: SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

1. Note: Some of the events in the Tribulation may occur in a slightly different sequence, and all theological attempts to get some form of sequence needs to be “sat with” as a best guess at this time, for people at the time will have the Holy Spirit’s guidance to clarify all matters of timing and direction as to their right response.

2. CHURCH AGE
a) Rapture of the Church (**1 Corinthians 15:51-58, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**).
b) Judgment Seat of Christ (believers only - purpose is rewards) (**1 Corinthians 3:12-15**).

3. TRIBULATION (first 3 1/2 years)
a) Revival of Roman Empire, Ten Nation Confederacy (**Daniel 7:7, 24, Revelation 13:1, 17:3, 12, 13**).
b) Rise of Middle East Dictator (**Daniel 7:8, Revelation 13:1-8**).
c) Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem
d) Seven seals judgments (**Revelation 6:1ff**) and seven trumpets judgments (**Revelation 8:7ff**).
e) Two witnesses preach from Jerusalem until killed.
f) Peace treaty with Israel (**Daniel 9:27**).
g) World church established (**Revelation 17:1-15**).
h) Russia attacks Israel about four years before the second coming of Christ (**Ezekiel 38, 39**).

4. GREAT TRIBULATION (second 3 1/2 years)
a) Peace treaty with Israel broken
b) Antichrist sets up Abomination of Desolation and demands worship (**Matthew 24:15,21**).
c) World government, world economic system, world religion begins (**Daniel 7:23, Revelation 13:5-8, 17:16, 17**).
d) Seven bowl judgments (**Revelation 16:2ff**).
e) Martyrdom of many Tribulation Saints and Jews (**Revelation 7:9-17, 13:15**).
f) Catastrophic divine judgments poured out on the earth (**Revelation 6:17**).
g) World war breaks out in Middle East; battle of Armageddon (**Daniel 11:40-45, Revelation 9:13-21, 16:12-16**).

5. SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST
a) Second coming of Christ (**Matthew 24:27-31, Revelation 19:11**).

b) Tribulation surviving believers proceed into the Millennium (**Matthew 3:12**).
c) Unbelievers cast off the earth (**Ezekiel 20:33-38, Matthew 3,12, 25:31-46, Jude 14, 15, Revelation 19:15-21, 20:1-4**).
d) Satan bound (**Revelation 20:1-3**).
e) Resurrection of Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs (**Revelation 20:4**).

6. MILLENNIUM
a) Millennial kingdom begins (**Revelation 20:5, 6**).
b) Christ reigns on earth for 1,000 years in perfect environment and peace (**Revelation 20:4-6**).
c) Satan released at the end of the Millennium (**Revelation 20:7-9**).
d) Rebellion of Gog and Magog at the end of the Millennium (**Revelation 20:7-10**).
e) Resurrection of all unbelievers (**Revelation 20:5a**).
f) Great White Throne Judgment (unbelievers only - purpose is judgment) (**Revelation 20:11-15**).

7. ETERNITY
a) New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem (**Revelation 21, 22**).
b) Believers blessed forever with Christ (**Revelation 21 - 22:5)**.
c) Unbelievers punished forever with Satan (**Matthew 25:41**).

CHRIST: FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

1. Old Testament saints had difficulty in distinguishing between the two advents of Christ. (**1 Peter 1:10,11**)

2. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. (**Isaiah 53:7**)

3. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as the conquering King and Lion of the tribe of Judah. (**Isaiah 11:1-12**)

4. Jesus commenced his ministry announcing the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (**Matthew 4:17**) This connects the first and second advents.

5. Old Testament Prophecy showed that the Messiah would:-
   a) Be born of a virgin. (**Isaiah 7:14**)
   b) Be of the tribe of Judah. (**Genesis 49:10**)
   c) Be of the house of David. (**Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 33:21**)
   d) De as a sacrifice. (**Isaiah 53:1-12**)
   e) Be crucified. (**Psalm 22:1-21**)
   f) Be resurrected from the dead. (**Psalm 16:8-11**)
   g) Return to earth at his second advent. (**Zechariah 8:3**)
   h) Be seated at the right hand of God. (**Psalm 110:1**)

6. It should be noted that the return of Christ for the Church (the Rapture) as given in (**1Thessalonians 4:14-18**) was not revealed in the Old Testament - it is a mystery doctrine of the Church (**Colossians 3:4-6**)

7. The day of the Second Advent is characterised by supernatural darkness
   a) When Christ returns every eye shall see him (**Matthew 24:29-30**) Christ is the light of the world and he will return to a world covered in darkness (symbolic of sin).
   b) The darkness is similar to the darkness of the day of our Lord's crucifixion which hid the Lord Jesus Christ from man's sight whilst he was bearing our sins. (**Mark 15:33**)
   c) The Second Advent delivers the Jewish believers besieged in Jerusalem by the King of the North. (**Daniel 11, Zechariah 12:1-3, 14:1-4**)
   d) Other passages indicating that the day of the Second Advent is a day of total darkness on the earth. (**Isaiah 13:9-10, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11, Joel 3:14-15, Amos 5:18, Zechariah 14:6, Matthew 24:29-30, Luke 21:25-27, Revelation 6:12-17**)

8. Heralds of the Two Advents of Christ

   A herald is a person who preceded' a King in ancient times to announce his arrival. The King that we study is the Lord Jesus Christ.

a) First Advent
   i) Human herald - John the Baptist (**Matthew 3**)
   ii) Angelic heralds - Angels (**Luke 2:1-15**)

b) Second Advent
   i) Human heralds - Moses, Elijah (**Revelation 11**)
   ii) Angelic herald - The mighty angel (**Revelation 10**)

CHRIST TYPES: ANTICHRIST AND CHRIST CONTRASTED

1. Christ came from above. (**John 6:38**)
2. Antichrist will ascend from the pit. (**Revelation 11:7**)
3. Christ came in his Father's name. (**John 5:43**)
4. Antichrist will come in his own name. (**John 5:43**)
5. Christ humbled himself. (**Philippians 2:8**)
6. Antichrist will exalt himself. (**2 Thessalonians 2:4**)
7. Christ was despised. (**Luke 23:18**)
8. Antichrist will be admired. (**Revelation 13:3,4**)
9. Christ will be exalted. (**Philippians 2:9**)
10. Antichrist will be cast down to hell. (**Revelation 19:20**)
11. Christ came to do his Father's will. (**John 6:38**)
12. Antichrist will come to do his own will. (**Daniel 11:36**)
13. Christ came to save. (**Luke 19:10**)
14. Antichrist will come to destroy. (**Daniel 8:24**)
15. Christ is the good shepherd. (**John 10:1-5**)
16. Antichrist is the evil shepherd. (**Zechariah 11:16,17**)
17. Christ is the true vine. (**John 10:1**)
18. Antichrist is the vine of the earth. (**Revelation 14:18**)
19. Christ is the truth. (**John 14:6**)
20. Antichrist is the lie. (**2 Thessalonians 2:11**)
21. Christ is the Holy One. (**Mark 1:24**)
22. Antichrist is the lawless one. (**2 Thessalonians 2:8**)
23. Christ is the man of sorrows. (**Isaiah 53:3**)
24. Antichrist is the man of sin. (**2 Thessalonians 2:3**)
25. Christ is the Son of God. (**Luke 1:35**)
26. Antichrist is the son of perdition. (**2 Thessalonians 2:3**)

27. Christ is the mystery of godliness. (**1 Timothy 3:16**)

28. Antichrist is the mystery of iniquity. (**2 Thessalonians 2:7**)

ANGELS

1. There are two kinds of angels – all angels were directly created by the Lord God (**Psalm 148:2-4**):

a) Elect Angels (**1 Timothy 5:21**) - those which have chosen to remain with God.

b) Fallen angels - those which have rebelled against God and followed Satan:
i) imprisoned ones (**Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4**) - apparently active on earth prior to the Flood (**Genesis 6**)
ii) demons, currently active on earth (**1 Corinthians 10:20,21, Mark 5:1-20**)

2. There are various orders in the angelic realm.

a) Cherubim (highest order) (**Genesis 3:24, Exodus 25:19-20**) Cherubs were originally the defenders of divine holiness. Lucifer (Satan) was a cherub (**Ezekiel 28:14**)

b) Seraphim - (**Isaiah 6:2**). Seraph means burning ones.

c) Rulers, Principalities and Powers - can refer to human authorities, but usually refers to angels (and generally to fallen angels). (**Ephesians 3:10, 6:12, Colossians 1:16**). They control certain segments of the human race, they can control the voice and the mind. (**Mark 5:1-20**).

d) Ministering Angels
i) Guardian angels. (**Hebrews 1:14**). Protect and assist believers.
ii) Angels of the waters. (**Revelation 16:5**). Water is used as a prison. Abyss (Greek), refers to an underwater prison.
iii) Angels of the abyss. (**Revelation 9:1,11**).An angel which has a special responsibility for the abyss.
iv) Angel of fire. (**Revelation 14:18**).
v) Angels of judgement. (**Revelation 8:2, ch 15,16**) - trumpets and bowls.
vi) Watcher angels. (**Daniel 4:13**).

3. Appearance of angels:
a) Angels appear most often resembling human beings (**Genesis 18:1-2, Hebrews 13:2**)
b) Angels are described variously as having wings, many eyes, many faces (**Isaiah 6:2, Ezekiel 1**) and often glow with brilliant light (**Matthew 28:2-3**). They need none of the above manifestations – for these are simply manifestations in space-time. They are spiritual beings and their actual appearance and shape is hidden form us at this time given our limits.
c) Lucifer (Satan) was the most beautiful creature ever to come from the hand of God (**Ezekiel 28:12-17**)
d) Angels are NOT pink fat babies with wings, or red skinned creatures with horns and forked tails. They are spirit beings and so can take any shape at all. They are from beyond space-time and so can take any shape or form. **Luke 24:39, Colossians 1:16**.

4. Named angels:
a) Lucifer, son of the morning, was the covering cherub over the Throne of God (Isaiah 14:12). His name is now Satan, the accuser/slanderer (**Revelation 12:10**)
b) Gabriel a messenger angel (**Daniel 8:16, 9:21, Luke 1:19,26**)
c) Michael a fighting angel (**Revelation 12:7, Jude 9**) and guardian angel of Israel. (**Daniel 10:21, 12:1**)

5. Angels and Christ's Incarnation
a) At his birth - (**Luke 2:9-15**)
b) At his temptation - (**Matthew 4:11**)
c) At his resurrection - (**Matthew 28:2**)
d) At his ascension - (**Acts 1:10**)
e) At the Second Advent - (**Matthew 13:37-39, 24:31, 25:31, 2 Thessalonians 1:7**)

6. Angels and Man
a) Angels were watching at the time of man's creation, for they were made first, and our creation is related to their fall – we are proving something important to the angels and they are very interested in us. (**Job 38:1-7**)
b) Angels were present when God gave Moses the Law. (**Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53**).
c) Angels are watching us now. (**1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12**)

d) The elect angels rejoice whenever someone is saved (**Luke 15:7-10**).

7. Many times revelations from God were mediated through angels -
a) The Law of Moses - **Exodus 3:2 , Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53, Hebrews 2:2**
b) Prophetical announcements to Daniel - **Daniel 7:16, 8:16-26, 9:20-27, 10:1-12:13**
c) Prophetical announcements to Zechariah - **Zechariah 1:9, 2:3, 4:1,5, 5:5, 6:4,5**
d) Announcement of the birth of John to Zacharias - **Luke 1:11-20**
e) Announcement of the birth of Jesus to Mary - **Luke 1:26-38**, and Joseph - **Matthew 1:20-21**
f) They will yet announce and action the re-gathering of Israel. **Isaiah 27:12-13, Matthew 24:29-31**.

ANGELS – ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. There is an angelic conflict and it is intimately related to our presence in this world.

2. ETERNITY PAST

[a] Initially God created angels. At creation we are told that there was unity as all the angels sang in unison.
[b] Satan as Lucifer with the title Son of the Morning was the head of the angels. **Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28:12-15**
[c] It is noted that the Lord Jesus Christ is now called Son of the Morning in **2 Peter 1** showing that the Lord replaced Satan as a result of His victory at the Cross.

3. FALL OF SATAN

[a] Satan became proud and attempted a coup d'etat against God in **Isaiah 14:12-17**
[b] When Satan fell he took one third of the angels with him. **Revelation 12:9**.
[c] The angels who exist forever therefore fall into two permanent groups:
(i) Elect Angels who remained faithful to God (**1 Timothy 5:21**)
(ii) Fallen angels who chose to follow Satan fall into two categories:
(1) Imprisoned ones were made inoperative at the time of the Flood (**Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4**)
(2) Demons who are currently operative (**1 Corinthians 10:20,21, Mark 5:1-20**)
[d] There is therefore a spiritual warfare between elect and fallen angels, which affects the human race. (**Ephesians, 6:12, Revelation 12)**

4. SENTENCE ON THE FALLEN ANGELS

[a] In eternity past Satan and the fallen angels were judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire - **Matthew 24:51**
[b] It would appear that Satan appealed against his sentence and said "how can a God of Love sentence any of his creatures to the lake of fire?"
[c] The answer is in the character of God who is HOLY as well as LOVE. His holiness can only judge sin and rebellion.
[d] The lake of fire therefore was not created for man. Man ends up in the lake of fire due to his own negative attitude towards God.

5. MAN'S ROLE IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

[a] This sentence which was given before man existed has not yet executed and will not be so until the end of the Millennium in **Revelation 20:10**.
[b] There must be a long lapse of time before the sentence is executed with this period being taken up with the whole of human history. Therefore the purpose of the existence of the human race and its relation to God can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.
[c] Through the creation of man God provides a clear legal witness to Satan and his angels of their sin. The whole of human history is to prove certain points to the angels. Things can happen in your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and these can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.

6. FALL OF MAN AND VICTORY OF THE GOD MAN

[a] Man starts off lower than the angels. **Hebrews 2:9** tells us that Jesus Christ made Himself a little lower than the angels.
[b] Although Adam failed to be victorious the Lord Jesus Christ replaces Adam in history and won the battle in His humanity. **1 Corinthians 15:22** tells us that in Adam all die, in Christ shall all be made alive.
[c] A new form of creature judges come into existence and will judge the angels **1 Corinthians 6:1-3**

7. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ANGELS AND MAN

[a] Angels and mankind have a number of parallels with human free will being tested in exactly the same way as angelic free will.
[b] Angels began in innocence and full obedience to God (**Job 38:7 Ezekiel 28:14-15**)

Man began in innocence (**Genesis 2:25**)
Angels sinned - rebellion of Satan (**Isaiah 14:12-14**)
Man sinned - rebellion of Adam (**Genesis 3:1-7**)
Angels are divided into two categories - elect or fallen.
Man is divided into two categories - believers and unbelievers. (**John 3:36**)

8. ADAM AND FREEWILL

[a] God created Adam and Eve, to show Satan that mankind, created lower than angels (**Hebrews 2:6-7**), would choose to obey God. Mankind therefore, by a choice of freewill, would decide whether to obey God and be blessed, or to disobey God and be judged (the same choice that Satan had).
[b] A test was instituted for man's freewill - obedience to God or disobedience. (**Genesis 2:16-17**).
Adam - and therefore all mankind - sinned and thereby rebelled against God.
All of mankind, therefore, is in the same condition of sinful rebellion as Satan.
[c] However, God instituted another test of freewill for mankind - will they choose to return to God through Jesus Christ, or will they choose to continue in sin and rebellion (**John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9**).
[d] Anyone who chooses to return to God will be saved; anyone who chooses to remain in rebellion to God will be judged in the lake of fire, the same fate as Satan (**Matthew 25:41**)
[e] Therefore, by the work of Christ on the cross, and man's freewill faith in Christ, God has vindicated His love to save and His justice to judge.

9. RESOLUTION OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

Stage 1 - Salvation - by faith, man is saved and made positionally superior to angels **(Hebrews 2:6-7)**
Stage 2 - Christian Walk - by faith, the believer overcomes Satan **(Ephesians 6:10-17)**
Stage 3 - Eternity -in Christ, the believer will judge Satan and his fallen angels (**Hebrews 2:8, 1 Corinthians 6:3)**

10. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Angels watch the human race. (**1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12**)
Elect angels rejoice every time someone is saved (**Luke 15:10**)

11. THREE BASIC QUESTIONS

The angelic conflict answers three basic questions:-

[a] Why man? Inside man is a soul with mentality and freewill which when linked together resolves the angelic conflict, (**Colossians 2:14-15, Hebrews 2**). The cross is the real victory in the angelic conflict.

[b] Why sin? Sin resolves stage 1 of the plan of God (see paragraph 9). At the cross sin was judged and the barrier between man and God was removed so that man's relationship with God depends on his free will. Every time a person accepts Christ, elect angels rejoice. In the garden man was innocent and all he had to do was stay away from one tree. Now man is guilty he has to come to a tree (the cross). (**Genesis 2:17, 1 Peter 2:24**).

[c] Why suffering? Suffering resolves the issue in Stage 2. Suffering involves the promise principle. (**1 Peter 1:7-8, Romans 5:2-4**). Suffering is designed for blessing and is a further blow to Satan. It is to demonstrate the love of God in a way that cannot be done in eternity as in eternity there is no more sorrow, pain or death. (**Revelation 21:4**)

12. STAGES IN THE CONFLICT [SEE SATANIC ATTACK ON THE PLAN OF GOD]

[a] From the fall of man to the ascension of Christ the line of Christ and Jesus Christ himself were the target of attack. Once the ascension was a fact in history Satan was unable to attack the line of the Saviour.
[b] The resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ caused intensification in the angelic conflict.
[c] Once Christ is glorified at the right hand of the Father the angelic conflict becomes intensified in the Church age.
[d] Every Church Age believer is now a target and because of this every believer has had special provisions made for him:

- (i) Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (**John 14:17**)
- (ii) Indwelling of Jesus Christ (**John 14:23**)
- (iii) Completed canon of Scripture (**1 Corinthians 13:10**)

13. PROGRESSION TO THE LAKE OF FIRE

This explains the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ from the time he sat down at the right hand of the Father until the Last Judgment. **Psalm 110:1** says "The Lord [God the Father] said to my Lord [God the Son], Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

[a] The first stage – Insurgency warfare – Pentecost - Rapture
During this time He calls out the personnel who will replace the angelic council members who have been condemned **1 Corinthians 4:8, 6:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 3:21**
The angelic council comprises God and all the angels as seen in **1 Kings 22:19-23 and 2 Chronicles 18:18-23**

[b] The second Stage – Rapture to Second Advent - Confrontation
During this time the new members of the angelic council are evaluated in relation to their divine and human good, rewarded [**1 Corinthians 3:11-15**], they lose their old sin nature and have a resurrection body. The rebellious members, Satan and his followers are cast out of heaven **Revelation 12:4**

[c] The third stage – Second Advent – Victory Stage
Christ casts Satan and the fallen angels into hell for a thousand years and rightfully asserts His authority.

[d] The fourth stage – The Last Judgement. The Lake of Fire was created for Satan and his angels **Matthew 25:41**
Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire with the demons and the unbelievers. Unbelievers join them in the Lake of Fire because they have not accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The old creation is destroyed and a new heavens and a new earth provided by God. At that point all knees shall bow and the promise of making His enemies His footstool will have been fulfilled.

14. THE BELIEVERS AND THE FINAL RESULT OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

The result of the angelic conflict:

Stage 1 - Salvation - saved mankind is positionally superior to angels;

Stage 2 - Christian Walk - through suffering the believer develops his faith towards Christ to such an extent that he thereby shows the fallen angels the certainty of their doom;

Stage 3 - Heaven - In eternity the believer in his resurrection body will be physically superior to angels.

15. CONCLUSION

Through the fall of man Satan obtained control of the world though not necessarily control of mankind.
What makes it possible for man to live in the Devil's world and not be under his control? - Free will.

By using The Word of God you can make decisions that are completely against Satan and his concepts.
Satan is the ruler of this world. (**2 Corinthians 4:4, John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, Ephesians 2:2**)
However we have the Bible - the mind of Christ (**1 Corinthians 2:16**). We should know it and use it.

SATANIC COUNTERFEITS (He doesn't create; he fakes, he deceives, he distorts, he destroys)

1. Doctrine of Demons (**1 Timothy 4:1**)
2. Communion Table (**1 Corinthians 10:20-21**)
3. Ministers (**2 Corinthians 11:12-15**)
4. Gospel (**2 Corinthians 11:3-4**)
5. Spirituality (**Galatians 3:2-3**)
6. Righteousness (**Matthew 19:16-28**)
7. Power (**2 Thessalonians 2:8-10**)
8. Gods (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**)
9. Religions (**Matthew 23**)

ANGELS – CROSS AND SATAN

1. With His death on the Cross Christ dealt with sin as a whole. (**Colossians 1:15-22, 1 John 2:2**)

2. With the removal of the sin barrier Satan's power was negated. (**John 12:31, 16:11, Colossians 2:14, Hebrews 2:14,**)

3. Judgment upon Satan has been pronounced but the sentence has not been executed, he is still prince of this world. (**2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 2:2**)

4. He is still the deceiver and liar who leads astray foolish believers (**1 Peter 5:8-9**)

5. The cross is God's grace provision for the salvation of all who will believe in the Lord. Satan's attack is the philosophy of works, promoting the idea that man can do without the need of a Saviour. (**Ephesians 2:8-9**)

6. Satan's judgment has been progressively revealed:-
   a) In the garden of Eden. (**Genesis 3:15**)
   b) At the Cross. (**John 12:31**)
   c) In the Tribulation. (**Revelation 12:7-12**)
   d) At the Second Advent. (**Revelation 20:1-3**)
   e) At the Last Judgement. (**Revelation 20:10**)

7. Satan's rebellion centres on two sins, pride and lying. (**Isaiah 14:12-24, Ezekiel 28:17, John 8:44**)

8. God's plan calls for sin to be removed and with it Satan's power. The victory on the Cross will lead to the glory of God and the proclamation throughout all eternity of the perfect justice of God. (**1 John 3:8**)

ANGELS – DEMONS

1. Occult practices such as astrology, divination and spiritism are condemned by the scriptures (**Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:9-12**). This was punishable by death in Israel. (**Leviticus 20:27**)

2. Demonism has exercised much influence in history (**Ezekiel 21:21, Daniel 10:13**). Evil is associated with the rule of demon possessed kings. (**2 Kings 21:1-17**)

3. The judgement of demons involved the destruction of demon possessed people and religious systems associated with idolatry (**Isaiah 19:1-3, cf Deuteronomy 7:5**)

4. Many nations have been destroyed for demon practices.
   a) Canaanites (**Deuteronomy 18:9-12**)
   b) Babylonians (**Isaiah 46:1-7, 47:1-15**)
   c) The judgement of Egypt's first born included the judgement of demons (**Exodus 12:12**)

5. The return of nations to the battle of Armageddon is by demon influence (**Revelation 16:13-16**).

6. Satan and the occult forces will be imprisoned during the Millennium (**Isaiah 24:21-23; Revelation 20:1-3**).

7. Demons are called "hairy ones" (**Leviticus 17:7**), destroyers (**Deuteronomy 32:17**) and demons.

8. Demons
   a) Seek to possess men or animals (**Mark 5:1-13**).
   b) Deceive man into false doctrines (**1 Timothy 4:1**).
   c) Believe and tremble (**James 2:19**).
   d) Speak both truth and lies (**2 Chronicles 18:21; Acts 16:17-18**).

9. Satan rules the demon world (**Matthew 12:24-28**). Demons have a hierarchy (**Daniel 10:12,13,20; Ephesians 6:12**).

10. Sacrificing to idols is worship of demons (**Deuteronomy 32:17, Psalm 106:36-38, 1 Corinthians 10:19-21**).

11. The following activities can lead to demon possession (for the unbeliever) or demon influence (for the believer):
a) Submission to demons through idolatry (**1 Corinthians 10:19-21**) and occult practices such as mental telepathy, clairvoyance and spiritism (**Deuteronomy 18:9-12**).
b) Specific dedication of one's body to demons, such as the Hindu soma and shamanism.
c) Any practice in which you "lose control" of your mind and senses, such as drugs and alcohol (**Galatians 5:20**, the Greek word for "sorcery" is "pharmakeia"), meditation and trances, hypnotic rhythms in music and dance.
d) Sexual cults, such as the “Asherah/Ashteroth Cults” (**Judges 6:25-28, 2 Kings 21:3**)

12. When people reject God, He may allow Satan and demons to administer discipline, even death (**John 8:44, 1 Corinthians 5:5, 1 Timothy 3:6-7**).

13. Demon influence can cause abnormal psychological behaviour, physical strength, sickness, etc (**Mark 5:1-5, Job 2:6-8**)

14. Jesus Christ has conquered all demon power (**Matthew 10:8**).

ANGELS – MEDIATORS OF REVELATION

Many times revelations from God were mediated through angels.

[i] The Law of Moses -, **Exodus 3:2 , Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53, Hebrews 2:2**

[ii] Prophetical announcements to Daniel - **Daniel 7:16, 8:16-26, 9:20-27, 10:1-12:13**

[iii] Prophetical announcements to Zechariah - **Zechariah 1:9, 2:3, 4:1,5, 5:5, 6:4,5**

[iv] Announcement of the Birth of John to Zacharias - **Luke 1:11-20**

[v] Announcement of the Birth of Jesus to Mary - **Luke 1:26-38**, and Joseph - **Matthew 1:20-21**

ANGELS – SOME NAMES USED OF THEM

1. Angels – “messengers/servants” - Matthew 24:36, 25:31, Hebrews 1:6.

2. Co-workers, fellow-servants - Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9.

3. Holy Ones - Daniel 4:13, 17, Mark 8:38, 1 Timothy 5:21.

4. Elders - possibly the 24 “Elders” are angels, not men - Revelation 4:4ff

5. Mighty Ones - Joel 3:11, Psalm 103:20.

6. Morning stars - Ezekiel 1:7-14, Matthew 28:2-3, Acts 10:3, 30, 12:17. Revelation 2:28.

7. Princes - Daniel 10:13, 20, 21, 12:1.

8. Principalities, Powers….- Romans 8:38, 1 Cor 15:24, Eph 1:21, 2:2, 3:10, 6:12, Col 1:16, Col 2:10-15, 1 Peter 3:22.

9. Sons of God - Job 1:6, 38:7, Psalm 89:6.

10. Watchers - Daniel 4:13, 17, 23.

SATAN – ADVERSARY

1. SCRIPTURE **Genesis 3; Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; Matthew 4; Revelation.**

2. BIOGRAPHY

Satan is the most beautiful creature ever to be created by God. He is an angel who rebelled against God before the creation of man (**Isaiah 14:12-15**). Originally he was the covering angel, the personal attendant of Jesus Christ in the very throne room of God. Unlike God, Satan is a created being and as such can only be in one place at any one time. He is attended by a vast number of angels (called demons) who have given him unswerving allegiance.

After the creation of man, he tempted Adam and Eve to be as gods and to know good and evil by disobeying God. Satan then became the ruler of this world (**Genesis 3:1-7**). He attacked the human race in many ways prior to the birth of Jesus Christ. Throughout Jesus Christ's life, Satan attacked the Lord. Since Christ's victory at the cross he attacks believers. Satan still has access into heaven where he accuses the brethren. Halfway through the tribulation period Satan is thrown out of heaven (**Revelation 12:7-9**). This causes him to intensify his attack on the human race. During the millennium he is confined to the bottomless pit, allowing a perfect environment on the earth (**Revelation 20:1-3**). After a brief rebellion at the end of the millennium (**Revelation 20:7-10**), Satan is condemned to the eternal lake of fire which was created for the devil and his angels.

3. EVALUATION

Satan is called:
a) The destroyer (**Revelation 9:11**).
b) The accuser of the brethren (**Revelation 12:10**).
c) The adversary (**1 Peter 5:8**).
d) Beelzebub, prince of devils (**Matthew 12:24**).
e) The deceiver of the whole world (**Revelation 12:9**).
f) The great dragon (**Revelation 12:9**).
g) An enemy (**Matthew 13:28,29**).
h) The wicked one (**Matthew 13:19,38**).
i) The father of lies (**John 8:44**).
j) The god of this world (**2 Corinthians 4:4**).
k) A murderer (**John 8:44**).
l) The prince of the power of the air (**Ephesians 2:2**).
m) The ruler of this world (**John 12:31; 14:30**).
n) The ancient serpent (**Revelation 12:9**).
o) The tempter (**Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5**).
p) A blinder of minds (**2 Corinthians 4:4**).
q) A roaring lion (**1 Peter 5:8**).

4. PRINCIPLES

a) Believers are in Christ and therefore in a position of supremacy over Satan (**Romans 8:37**).
b) Satan was defeated at the cross once and for all (**Colossians 2:14,15**).
c) He can therefore only use devices and schemes, trying to convince the believer that he can still win the battle against God.
d) Satan, through religion, tries to get man to work independently from God.
e) A Christian out of fellowship can promote principles proposed by Satan (**Matthew 4:8-10; Mark 8:33**).
f) Satan will use Scripture slightly changed, or added to, to try and confuse believers and lead them astray (**Matthew 4:3-10; cf. Psalm 91:11,12**).
g) If Satan the adversary is resisted he will flee from you (**James 4:7**).
h) Knowledge and application of the Scriptures is essential in understanding the wiles of the devil (**Ephesians 6:11**).

SATAN'S DESTINY

1. Satan is called a "prince" indicating that he had his own power and followers. **(John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, Ephesians 2:2, 2 Corinthians 4:4)**

2. Yet he is still a creature, and is still ultimately subject to God (**Job 1:12**)

3. At the cross, Christ defeated Satan, as his main power was through sin and death. **(John 12:27-32, Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:54-56, Colossians 2:14-15, Hebrews 2:14-15**

4. God purpose with the world is not yet complete - therefore the enforcement of Satan's defeat will not take place until the end of the Millennium (**Hebrews 1:13, Revelation 20:10**)

5. Satan's final judgement is sure:-
a) When he fell he was condemned, this was before (**Genesis 1:2**).
b) In the garden the certainty of God's judgement was announced. (**Genesis 3:15**)
c) The Cross was his final defeat. (**John 12:31, Colossians 2:14-15**)
d) In the midst of the Great Tribulation his access to heaven will be stopped. He will no longer be able to slander believers. (**Revelation 12:7-12**)
e) At the Second Advent he is arrested and bound. (**Revelation 20:1-3**)
1f) After the Millennium he is briefly released to lead the last great rebellion against God, and is finally cast into the Lake of Fire. (**Revelation 20:10**)
g) There are therefore four falls of Satan:-
i) from his place in eternity past to the earth with access to heaven.
ii) then that access is denied causing him to be restricted to the Earth.
iii) he is then contained in Hades for a thousand years.
iv) then his final fall into the Lake of Fire.

6. Satan has six abodes in his journey from the throne room of God to the Lake of Fire.
a) The Throne of God - **Ezekiel 28:12**
b) The Mineral Garden of Eden - **Ezekiel 28:13**
c) The Atmospheric Heavens - **Ephesians 2:2, 6:12**
d) The Earth - **Revelation 12:7-12**
e) The Abyss - **Revelation 20:1-3**
f) The Lake of Fire - **Revelation 20:7-10**

SATAN'S STRATEGY

1. Believers are warned against him and his tactics. **(Ephesians 4:27, 6:11-13, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8)**

2. We must be ready and alert. **(2 Corinthians 2:11)**

3. Satan is a deceiver and a counterfeiter. He uses deception - not obviously wrong or sinful - but very subtle changes to the truth **(Genesis 3:1)**. Remember, a counterfeit looks like the original.

4. Satan is described as an "angel of light" - often seeming attractive and "good". (**2 Corinthians 11:14**)

5. His tactics

a) Towards unbelievers.
i) To blind them regarding the gospel. **(2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10)**
b) Towards believers.
i) Satan seeks to hinder our growth and witness. **(1 Peter 5:8)**
ii) Satan will mislead into false doctrine and legalism. **(1 Timothy 5:14-15)**
iii) He persuades believers to ignore the will of God through disobedience **(Genesis 2:17, James 4:7-8)**
iv) Satan often attacks our assurance of salvation so that we doubt God.
v) Worry **(1 Peter 5, 7-9)**
vi) Fear of death. **(Hebrews 2:14-15)**
vii) He accuses believers of sin both to God and to the believer (using guilt). **(Revelation 12:9-10, Job 1:6-11**
viii) He takes our focus off Christ by getting eyes on self (**1 Corinthians 1:10-11**), on people (**1Corinthians 1:12**), on things (**Hebrews 13:5-6**)
ix) When we don't allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, we open ourselves up to Satanic attack. **(1 Corinthians 7:5, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 1 Timothy 5:14-15)**
x) The Lord will allow Satan to attack a believer as discipline for unconfessed sin. **(1 Timothy 1:20 cf 2 Corinthians 12:7)**

xi) Satan cannot indwell or possess a believer, only beguile them. **(Galatians 3:1)**

c) Towards the world in general.

i) The World - Satan tries to deceive the nations. **(Revelation 20:7-10)**

SATAN'S WORK

1. SATAN'S SPHERE OF OPERATIONS AMONG MANKIND (**Psalm 109:6-l3**)

a) Satan blinds mankind to the truth of the Word of God by means of religion. (v.7)
b) He has the power to shorten life. (v 8a)
c) He can remove persons from a place of authority (v 8b)
d) Satan can kill (v 9) but only by permission
e) He can persecute children (v 10)
f) He can remove wealth (v 11)
g) Satan can turn people against each other (v. 12)
h) He can cut off man's posterity to the second generation (v. 13)

2. SATAN AS A KILLER

a) He has the power of death (**Hebrews 2:14, 15**)
b) Killed Job's children (**Job 1:12, 18,19**)
c) Motivated Cain to murder Abel (**John 8:44, cf. 1 John 3:12**)
d) Often administers the sin unto death (**1 Corinthians 5:5**)

3. SATAN AS A SOURCE OF DISEASE

a) Was responsible for Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (**2 Corinthians 12:7**)
b) Produced illness in Job (**Job 2:6-8**)
c) Uses his demons to inflict diseases (**Matthew 12:22, Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38**)
d) Causes certain types of deafness, dumbness, paralysis and crippling effect by means of demon possession (**Matthew 4:24, 12:22, Mark 9:17, 18**)
e) When demon possession causes the affliction, the removal of the demon or demons produces an instant cure (**Matthew 10:1, Mark 1:32-34, 6:13, Acts 8:7, 19:12**)

4. SATAN AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DISCIPLINE

a) Desired to discipline Peter (**Luke 22:31, 32**)
b) Was authorised to discipline the Corinthian adulterer (**1 Corinthians 5:5**)
c) Was called upon by the Apostle Paul to administer extreme discipline to Hymenaeus and Alexander (**1Timothy 1:19,20**)
d) May become involved in the discipline of ministers and deacons (**1 Timothy 3:6, 7**)
e) Attacks through a believer's lack of forgiveness and orientation to grace (**2 Corinthians 2:10, 1l**)

5. SATAN AS A HEALER

a) Healing was a common spiritual gift associated with the apostles before the completion of the Canon of Scripture (**Acts 19:11, 12, cf Philippians 2:27, 2 Timothy 4:20**)
b) God still heals today (**Philippians 2:27**)
c) Since Satan possesses the power of disease he often counterfeits healing by the removal of demons (**Matthew 12:24, 24:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 16:14**)

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMON POSSESSION

a) Loss of individuality: the demon-possessed person no longer has control of faculties of the soul (**Mark 5:1-13, Luke 8:27, 9:39, 40**)

b) Abnormal behaviour:

i) Convulsions (**Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35**)
ii) Violence (**Matthew 8:28**)
iii) Abnormal strength (**Mark 5:4, Luke 8:29, Acts 19:16**)
iv) Raving (**Mark 5:5**)
v) Foaming at the mouth (**Mark 9:20**)
vi) Nakedness (**Luke 8:27**)

c) Loss of health:

i) Dumbness (**Mark 9:17, Luke 11:14**)
ii) Deafness and dumbness (**Mark 9:25**)

iii) Blindness and dumbness (**Matthew 12:22**)
iv) Epilepsy (**Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35**)
v) Mental illness (**Mark 5:15**)

7. DEMON POSSESSION EXPLAINS:
a) So called divine healing
b) Alleged speaking in tongues
c) Faked contact with the dead (**1 Samuel 28**)
d) Success of self styled exorcists
e) Rise of certain world leaders (**2 Thessalonians 2.9, Revelation 16:13, 14**)
f) Cause of some wars (**Revelation 20:8**)
g) Reincarnation
h) Fortune telling (**Acts 16:16**)

SATAN AND SATANIC ATTACK

1. Pre Adamic

Original Creation	**Genesis I:1**	Perfection and unity.
Creation of Satan	**Ezekiel 28:13-15**	Created the most beautiful creature, a genius.
Fall of Satan	**Isaiah 14:12-15**	"I will" 5 times. Satan sets himself up as God.
1/3 of Angels follow Satan	**Revelation 12:4**	
God's Judgement	**Matthew 25:41**	Lake of fire created for Satan and his angels.
Satan appeals		Man created with a free will to show the fairness of God's judgement.

Man having been created, Satan wages war firstly to get man to sin, secondly having had a Saviour promised to attack the line of Christ, thirdly an attack on the Saviour until He completed His work, fourthly to attack the Word of God and the individual believer.

2. Stage 1 - Innocence-Sinfulness

	Scripture	**Remarks**
Man created	**Genesis 1:26, 27**	God provides everything. One tree a test of free will.
Woman falls	**Genesis 3:1-6**	Through ignorance of God's Word
Man falls	**1 Timothy 2:13, 14**	Man chooses deliberately to go against God's provision.
Salvation promised	**Genesis 3:15**	

3. Stage 2 - Attack on the Line of the Saviour

Object:- If Satan can prevent the Saviour being physically born he has proved that God does not keep His promise in Genesis 3:15 and is therefore not perfect.

Attack 1. Cain kills Abel (Attack on the seed of the woman)	**Genesis 4:8, 9**	An unbeliever kills a believer but Seth, another believer is provided for the line of Christ.
Attack 2. Infiltration of Fallen Angels. (Attack on the humanity)	**Genesis 6:1-8**	Infiltration until only Noah's family left as the humanity. Flood removes angel/men demons incarcerated in Tartarus (Hades)
Attack 3. Tower of Babel (Attack on nationalism)	**Genesis 11:1 -7**	An attempt by Satan to bring in the Millennium without God. The original U.N. God forms nations and confuses their tongues.- Tower of Babel.
Abraham promised the Saviour will be descended from him.	**Genesis 12:1-3**	Attack on the line of Abraham.

Attack 4. Pharaoh of Egypt.	**Exodus 1:22**	Using Pharaoh by ordering the slaughter of the male Jews Satan attempts to eliminate the Jews.
David promised a King descended from him will reign forever	**2 Sam 7:12-16**	Satan now attacks the descendants of David
Attack 5. Against the Kings of Judah	**2 Kings 22:1, 2**	Josiah, boy King of Judah divinely protected comes to throne at age of 8 after coup d'etat eliminates every other member of the royal line.
Attack 6. Against the Jews	**Esther 3:6**	Satan attempts to destroy the Jews using Haman. Haman eventually executed.
Attack 7. Against Jerusalem.	**Isaiah 37:36**	185,000 Assyrian troops under Sennacherib killed by God outside Jerusalem.

4. Stage 3 - Attack on the Person of Christ

Attack 1. Possible stoning of Mary	**Matt 1:18-20**	The nobility of Joseph defended the as yet unborn Jesus.
Attack 2. Herod the Great.	**Matt 2:16-18**	Satan using Herod attempts to eliminate the Christ child by murdering all the young males in Bethlehem. Joseph takes Jesus to Egypt.
Attack 3. Temptation in Wilderness	**Matt 4:9**	A sinner cannot redeem other sinners. Satan offers the crown (Millennium) before the cross. Jesus follows God's plan.
Attack 4. Temptation not to go to the Cross.	**Matt 16:21-23**	Jesus follows God's plan although the cross was obnoxious to him.
Attack 5. Attempt to stone Jesus.	**John 8:59**	It was prophesied that the Saviour would die on wood. Stoning would have cut across this prophecy.
Attack 6. Attempt to tempt Jesus down from the cross.	**Matt 27:40**	If Jesus had come down from the cross there would have been no salvation.
Attack 7. The drugged wine.	**Matt 27:34**	Gall was a drug which if Jesus had accepted it would have impaired his free will and there would have been no salvation.

5. Stage 4 - Attacks since the Cross

Attack 1. Against Scripture.	Attempting to get false books accepted in the canon of Scripture. Liberalism and Modernism, Humanism and Evolution.
Attack 2. Revival of Roman Empire	Under Charlemagne in 800 and Charles V in 1500. Roman Catholic Church.
Attack 3. Massacre of Jews.	Hitler's final solution attempts to eliminate Jews. No Jews no Kingdom for Jesus to reign over. Inquisition, Crusades, Russian pogroms.
Attack 4. One World Government.	Revival of the Tower of Babel concept under the League of Nations and U.N.
Attack 5. Socialism.	Satan's millennium.
Attack 6. Persecution.	Nero, Reformation, Inquisition

6. Strategy of Satan at the Present Satan's strategy is divided into 3 sections.

(a) Towards unbelievers -
To blind them regarding the gospel. (**2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10)**

(b) Towards believers -
He accuses believers. (**Revelation 12-9, 10, Job 1:6-11**)
He persuades the believers to ignore the will of God through disobedience (**Genesis 2:17**), through worry (**1 Peter 5:7-9**), ignoring doctrine (**1 Chronicles 21:1**)
He seeks to entice the believer from the will of God. (**James 4:7, 8**)
He seeks to destroy the believer's focus by getting eyes on self (**1 Corinthians 1:10, 11** on people (**1 Corinthians 1:12**) by getting eyes on things (**Hebrews 13:5, 6**)
To get the believer frightened of death. (**Hebrews 2:14, 15**)

(c) Towards the world in general -
Satan tries to deceive the nations. (**Revelation 20:7-10**)

Principle:- The more you know about the Word of God the more you will be able to be effective as a Christian. c/f. Jesus in Matthew 4.

SATANIC ATTACK ON BELIEVERS

1. As believers we battle two enemies; the Old Sin Nature from within (**Romans 7:18, 8:8, Galatians 5:16-19**) and Satan and his “team” without. (**John 8:44, 1 John 3:8**)

2. We must know what Satan is up to and learn his strategies so that we might be ready and alert. (**2 Corinthians 2:11**)

3. Satan's most potent attack is to install false pastor teachers within the church who teach just enough false doctrine to sidetrack foolish believers. (**2 Corinthians 11:13-15**)

4. Satan attacks believer's assurance of salvation.

5. He also accuses believers of sin both to God and to the believer in the form of guilt. (**Revelation 12:9-10**)

6. Satan wants us to trust our feelings; God wants us to trust His Word. (**Romans 8:1**)

7. Satan lures believers away from the Word (Genesis 3:4) whilst God wants believers stabilised upon His Word. (**Isaiah 26:3**)

8. Satan hinders believers from doing the geographical and operational will of God.

9. Satan will do all he can to hinder the believer's growth: (**2 Peter 5:18**)
a) By getting the believer's eyes off Christ and onto self, others or circumstances
b) By encouraging lust for material things over spiritual growth
c) By encouraging mental attitude sins.

10. Satan is the author of sin and the founder of fear. We are not called to fear but to faith. (**2 Timothy 1:7**)

SATANIC FALSE REVIVAL

1. Satan has evangelists. (**2 Corinthians 11:13-16)**

2. These evangelists preach another gospel. **(2 Corinthians 11:3-4, Galatians 1:6-9)**

3. Behind every satanic revival is satanic doctrine. **(1 Timothy 4:1)**

4. Satan has a communion table. **(1 Corinthians 10:19-22)**

5. Satan has counterfeit righteousness in his religious system. **(Matthew 23:1-36)**

6. In the satanic revival he has a smokescreen. **(2 Corinthians 4:3-4)**

7. Satan has an angelic organisation. **(Ephesians 6:12)**

Remember, just before Jerusalem fell and the temples were destroyed, both in 586 BC and AD 70 the temples were full of people “worshipping”, its just their worship was legalistic and fake, without any genuine relationship with God behind it. Religious activity and full churches singing pop or traditional music is not a sign of anything spiritual necessarily. Religion is very popular, but genuine relationship with God who demands obedient worship, work and witness is not as common or as popular as the alternatives.

ANGELS – SATAN’S STRATEGY AND TACTICS

STRATEGY

Whilst God is trying to call out personnel for the angelic council Satan is trying to confuse and blind minds as to what God’s plan is. He does this by deceit. He tries to keep the gospel from the unbeliever and to keep doctrine from the believer so that they will not grow.

His other strategy is to try and eliminate Israel by pogroms and anti-Semitism. It is said that Christ will gather the Jews not Zionism as is happening at the moment. If he could destroy all the Jews which he cannot he will destroy the Plan of God.

TACTICS

These are the techniques used by Satan to try and achieve his strategy. His main tactic is implied in **John 8:44** where he is seen as the father of lies. There is no truth in Satan. He is a liar and has been from the beginning. The only truth is Christ the Word. Any one who deliberately distorts the truth is working for Satan. Rejection of Christianity is a rejection of the truth. By application all religions are therefore false.

Christians as a whole have failed to move out into all the areas of life and therefore have not claimed leadership in these areas and they have been forfeited to the unbeliever such areas as literature, history, philosophy, music, science and the like.

The Christian should be a conqueror ideologically and not militarily. During this time Satan tries to cause conflicts such as creation versus evolution, relativism versus absolute values, internationalism versus nationalism. In the international area he causes war and strife.

Satan tries to confuse the believer. In **Romans 6:6-11** the Bible says that the sin nature shall not have dominion over you. We are told to resist the devil and he will flee from you. Sometimes when we resist it does not work because the temptation is from your sin nature. You need to apply relevant Scriptures to your situation.

Satan will try and mislead you in the area of divine guidance. Satan can set up situations that will lead you out of the geographical will of God which can even extend to martyrdom. You need to do things in the Lord’s timing. Satan also perverts Scripture as seen in **Luke 4:11** with the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ where he misquotes **Psalm 91:10-11.**

When people wrote the Scriptures they did not sit around with a blank mind. They used their minds and were led by the Holy Spirit as to what to write. When they had visions or dreams their minds were not turned off. When confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ Paul spoke to Him, He used his mentality.

In **2 Corinthians 11** ministers can act as messengers from Satan. Part of the Satanic attack is to get people to look inwardly rather than at their position at the right hand of the Father. With the case of suffering and sickness its source is sometimes difficult to determine as it can be the purpose of God or it can be an attack of Satan. This is hard to discern.

Often the more spectacular manifestations is the method used to distract one from more important things such as studying and applying the Word.

With regards to the Word we have the teaching of false doctrine such as saying that Christ did not actually die on the Cross, that He was not truly human nor divine.

In relation to the gospel we have the picture in the parable of the Sower and the Seed of the bird coming down and taking away the seed that is sown.

In regard to worship he will mock God through senseless words. **Matthew 16** tells of Christ commanding Peter to get behind him as Peter is enthusiastic but has wrong concepts which Jesus saw as Satanic in origin as they did not conform to the Word of God. In **Acts 5** Satan filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira. He works in the children of disobedience.

Later on we will look at the strategies and tactics of the church. Spiritism and Occultism is something that the Christian should not dabble in. In **Deuteronomy 18:9** the Jews were told not to seek guidance from spiritism or occultism. The main attack on the church nowadays is not through cults but through spiritism and eastern religions and drugs. This is an attempt to break down the mentality of the soul. By these means you are opening the person up to demonic forces.

CHRIST – ROCK: CHRIST AS THE ROCK

1. Christ is the rock of salvation. **(Exodus 17:1-7, 1 Corinthians 10:4)**

2. Christ is the rock of judgement. **(Isaiah 8:1 4, 1 Peter 2:8)**

3. Christ is the rock of provision. **(Isaiah 26:3, 4)** “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever for in the Lord is the rock of ages.”

4. Christ is the foundation rock. **(Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22)**

5. Christ is the foundation rock of the Church. **(Matthew 16:16, 18, 1 Corinthians 3:11, Ephesians 2:20-22)**

6. Christ is the destroying rock of the Second Advent. **(Daniel 2:35)**

CHRIST – STONE: CHRIST AS A STONE THAT SMASHES SATAN’S COSMOS SYSTEM

1. The word for stone, takes us to the Messianic prophecies of the stone. **Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10,11, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11, Romans 9:32, 33, 10:11,13.**

2. Peter uses the word ‘stone’ in four ways through 1 Peter chapter 2 to draw attention to the nature of the Lord’s work for mankind and to demonstrate the finality of man’s rejection of his work.

   [a] The Lord is the “living stone” (verse 4); the one who gives life from death. Like the rock in the desert living waters come from him, but he is a hewn stone, not just a rock. The hewn stone (lithos) is a stone that has been under the mason’s hammer and chisel, and the Lord placed himself under discipline and obedience to win our salvation.

   [b] He becomes, through his obedience to the Father’s plan, the “precious cornerstone” (vs 6 -8); the key foundation of the new building, the church. Only those who are part of this Holy Spirit constructed structure are saved and secure for all eternity.

   [c] By most men he becomes the “rejected stone” (vs 4-7). They have observed him and they reject him as “unfit”, but God makes him the cornerstone of the future direction of history.

   [d] He is to those who reject him the “stone of stumbling” (vs 8). They will stumble and fall into eternity without hope because of their arrogant rejection of God’s provided Saviour.

EVIL

1. DEFINITION: Evil is Satan's policy in opposition to God's doctrine. Evil is therefore a collection of beliefs and practises that back up Satan's viewpoint rather than God's.

2. Evil is not necessarily bad, it is simply a policy that will take you away from the path that God prepared for you. Satan's tools are distortion, distraction and open deception.

3. False religion may be very moral and even ascetic (and therefore look "holy"), but if it is leading people away from God's revealed will it is evil.

4. Often evil can masquerade as "good". People who believe that their "good works" can satisfy God's holy demands are deceived by evil doctrine. **Romans 7:19,20**

5. Only God's Word, Bible Doctrine can help the believer distinguish between true good and evil, **Hebrews 3:13,14.**

6. Only a soul saturated in God's Word is truly protected from the subtlety of Satan's policy of evil. **Proverbs 2:10-14, 3:7, 19:23.**

7. Only applied knowledge of God's Word negates and neutralises evil. **Psalms 54:5, Romans 12:21, Isaiah 45.**

8. The issue for the believer is the daily choice to accept God's Word and therefore protect oneself against evil. God watches for our choices. **Proverbs 11:18,19, 22:3, 24:1-4, Ephesians 5:16, 2 Thessalonians 3:2,3.**

9. The company of evil people will distort the thinking of the believer and confuse his/her witness. **Isaiah 5:20, 1 Corinthians 15:23.**

10. There is no evil in God at all. **Psalm 5:4, 1 John 1:5, 4:4.**

11. God judges evil and will condemn it to the lake of fire for ever at the final judgement. **Psalm 34:16, Isaiah 13:11, Revelation 20:11ff**

12. In spite of evil still existing in the world due to Satan's on-going presence throughout the Church Age, the Lord is still on the throne, and his hand is on all things.

13. Satan only does things by "permission" and we are in the Lord's hands and so are, in Christ, safe. **Job 1:6-12, Proverbs 16:3, 4, Isaiah 45:6, 7**

HEAVEN AND HELL

SIMILARITIES

They are both real places. The Lord Jesus is very specific about Hell by using the word "topos" from which we get "topography" meaning a detailed description of a specific place. **(Luke 16:28).**

PURPOSE: To show God's glory.

Hell shows His glory by His perfect judgement and eternal punishment of evil. Satan, demons and evil people finally get what they deserve and what they have chosen in Hell.

God punishes justly, man cannot. That is what so many people, even the unsaved, find so frustrating about today, an unjust legal system.

DIFFERENCES

HEAVEN	HELL
1. Heaven is where Jesus is. **(Acts 1:1-11; Acts 7:55)**	Hell is complete separation from God, everlasting destruction. **(Matthew 25:46)**

HEAVEN	HELL
2. We will be reunited with loved ones in perfect happiness. We will also meet all the saints and the great names of the Bible. **(2 Samuel 12:23; Luke 16:22,23; Matthew 19:14; John 14:2)**	People are with Satan, demons, murderers, the immoral and perverted, liars, boasters, haters of God etc. (**Revelation 21:8, Romans 1:26-31**).
3. No sin. (**Revelation 21:27**)	Sin is unlimited and gets worse and worse (**Revelation 22:11**).
4. You have a special, spacious dwelling place (mansion) personally prepared by LJC perfectly customized to your personality and character. **(John 14:2)**	Shared accommodation in the Lake of Fire. (**Revelation 22:15**)
5. A pure and clean and perfectly peaceful environment. **(Revelation 21:27)**	Burns with intolerable heat and brimstone which is sulphur that gives off a foul smelling, highly toxic gas. **(Rev 14:10; 21:8)**
6. God wipes away every tear. (**Revelation 21:4**)	Weeping (intense, body shaking, uncontrollable crying) that never stops. (**Matt 8:12**) A place of sorrows **Psalm**
7. No pain, sickness or suffering in a glorious body that never tires. (Perfect health!) **Revelation 21:4.**	Pain of the whole body on fire but not consumed by it, gnashing of teeth in blind rage at yourself, your sins, other people and at God. Their torment never stops.
8. A place of light radiating from God's glory. No darkness. **(Revelation 21:23)**	Complete darkness, despite the flames, which are never put out. (**Matthew 25:30**)
9. Can eat and drink, but not necessary for life. (**Luke 24:42,43; Revelation 22:1,2**)	They scream for water and mercy. (**Luke 16:24**). They will drink the wine of God's righteous anger (**Revelation 14:10**).
10. Will spend eternity worshipping and serving God. **(Rev 5:10, Rev 22:3-6)**	A bottomless pit of eternal burning and punishment and torture. (**Revelation 20:1**)
You can do study and learn and explore all things and places, yet never reach full knowledge. There is no boredom in Heaven!	Torture added to by watching the activities and happiness of the saved in Heaven. (**Luke 16: 23-26**)

HELL AND HADES

1. HELL is from the Greek GEHENNA. This was a place where children were burned as offerings to Molech. (**2 Chronicles 33:6, Jeremiah 7:31**). Molech was a huge idol with outstretched paws on which the children were tied prior to being burnt to death.

2. HELL is the same as the Lake of Fire where the lost spend eternity. (**Revelation 19:20, 20:10**)

3. Hades (Gk) in the New Testament is often translated HELL. SHEOL (Heb) is the Old Testament equivalent. Hades and Sheol are in the centre of the earth, cf. Saul, Samuel (from Paradise or Abraham's Bosom) and the Witch of Endor. (**1 Samuel 28:7-19**) Hades or Sheol is the place of the souls and spirits of people who died while awaiting the resurrection. Hades is also the place of imprisonment of a certain group of angels - TARTARUS.

4. HADES is divided into three sections, one section being divided from the other two by a "Great Gulf' Fixed". (**Luke 16:19-31**) It should be noted that the story of Lazarus is a true story, and not a parable, because it mentions proper names (Lazarus) and a geographical location - Hades.)

   a) Abraham's Bosom or Paradise - The abode of the saved until the ascension of Jesus Christ. The Lord said to the repentant thief - "This day shall thou be with me in Paradise. (**Luke 23:43**)

   b) Torments - The abode of the unsaved, reserved until the last judgement at the end of the millennium. This is a place of great sorrow and suffering. **(Revelation 20:13)**

   c) Tartarus - The prison of fallen angels who kept not their first estate. These are fallen angels from Genesis 6. This is a place of imprisonment **(2 Peter 2:4)**

5. Since the ascension of Christ - Paradise has been empty, with the saved being transferred to the Third Heaven. (**2 Corinthians 12:1-4, Ephesians 4:7-10**)

6. Those who die now as believers go directly to the Third Heaven ("at home with the Lord"), with soul and spirit but no resurrection body. (**2 Corinthians 5:8**)

7. Those in Hades (Torments) will be brought before the Great White Throne after which they will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. (**Revelation 20:13-15**). This is the Last Judgement.

8. Hades is in the heart of the earth. (**Matthew 12:40; 1 Samuel 28:7-15**)

9. There are no degrees of punishment in the Lake of Fire.

   a) Degrees of punishment tend to deny the literal lake of fire. There is nothing to indicate the temperature of the lake of fire is not constant.

   b) Degrees of punishment is contrary to the doctrine of unlimited atonement. Christ died for every sin that has ever been committed. Man is not judged on the basis of his sins but human good. (**Revelation 20:11-15**)

   c) Degrees of punishment destroys the principle of salvation. Its concept is that one rejecter of grace gets less fire than another rejecter of grace. The unsaved are unsaved because they reject grace.

   d) Degrees of punishment is based on the theory that for a thesis there is an antithesis and when they come together you have synthesis (the Hegelian fallacy).

   e) False concept:- One person commits a bad sin, one person performs a marvellous good work. Obviously there must be different degrees of punishment in eternity.

JUDGEMENT – TWO DIFFERENT JUDGMENTS

A – GREAT WHITE THRONE (Unbelievers Only)

1. The judgement of the Great White Throne is the last judgement. **(Revelation 20:11-15)**

2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgement as there is no condemnation for Christians. **(Romans 8:1)**

3. The last judgement occurs at the end of the Millennium. (**Revelation 20:7-15**)

4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works (**Revelation 20:12**)

5. The judgement is to show that the Human works of man cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that He is only satisfied by "The Good Work" – the death of Christ on the Cross.

6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God, the condemned are cast into the Lake of Fire. **(Revelation 20:15)**

B – JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST (Believers only)

1. There are three types of judgement for believers in the Church Age.

   a) Judgement of Sins:- The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross substituted the payment of all man's sins. The penalty of sin is death. (**Romans 6:23**) There is therefore no judgement for those in Christ Jesus. (**Romans 8:1**). The substitutionary death is given in **2 Corinthians 5:19-2 1, Galatians 3:13**.

   b) Judgement of Self:- We are told that if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged. Failure to do so brings discipline. (**1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11:31, 32, 2 Corinthians 2:5-7, Hebrews 12:7, 1 John 1:9**)

   c) Judgement Seat of Christ:- This is the evaluation of the production of believers for the purpose of reward (**2 Corinthians 5:10**)

2. The Judgement Seat of Christ is a time of reward. Our human works (wood, hay, stubble) will be burned, our works in the power of the Spirit (gold, silver, precious stones) will be rewarded. (**1 Corinthians 3:11-16)**.

3. At the Judgement Seat of Christ the believer can be denied reward but can never lose his salvation. (**2Timothy 2:12-13**)

4. Backslidden believers have no reward at the Judgement Seat of Christ. (**Hebrews 6:7-12**)

5. The Judgement Seat of Christ is illustrated by the famous athletic games in the ancient world. (**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**)

6. Rewards at the Judgement Seat of Christ are based on grace. (**James 2:12, 13**)

7. Since we will be judged by Christ, we are not to judge each other (**Matthew 7:1-2**)

SATAN’S WORK ON EARTH IS LIKE “LEAVEN”

1. Leaven in Principle: Denotes any substance used to induce fermentation as in a dough or liquid.

2. First mention in Scripture: **Genesis 19:3** in connection with the angelic visitors to Lot's house prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot served them "unleavened bread".

3. First mention in Scripture relative to the Observation of a Feast: **Exodus 12:8, 15-20** - Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
   a) Leaven was undesirable and became a symbol of evil.
   b) Unleavened bread is a type of Christ and refers to His impeccability.

4. Leaven in **Matthew 13:33** represents the infiltration of religious apostasy during the Tribulation.

5. The Leaven of the Sadducees is rationalism, the sin of human viewpoint, resulting in gospel rejection. **(Matthew 16:6)**

6. The Leaven of the Pharisees is the Satanic counterattack against sound doctrine by religion, legalism and ritualism. **(Mark 8:15, Luke 12:1)**

7. The Leaven of Herod is the sin of worldliness (Romans 12:2) and power lust within a local congregation. **(Mark 8:15)**

8. The Leaven of the Corinthians is the sin of licentiousness and perversion. **(1 Corinthians 5:6,7, 1Corinthians 5:1,2)**

9. The Leaven of the Galatians is the sin of legalism, specifically their insistence upon circumcision for salvation. **(Galatians 5:9)**

SATAN'S PREFERRED RELIGIOUS TOOL - LEGALISM

1. There are some areas of God's law which the believer would never violate because it is his area of strength.

2. No two people have the same area of strength, no two people have the same area of weakness in their human nature.

3. Violation of one part of the law makes a person a sinner just as another part of the law - all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. **(Romans 3:23)**

4. Legalism and self righteousness is prone to forget that all sin comes from the sinful nature.

5. Everyone has a sinful nature. Violation of law demonstrates its existence.

6. The legalist emphasises the commandments he keeps. The honest person recognises the commandments he breaks.

7. Doctrine removes legalism and self righteousness on the basis of grace.

8. Legalism minimises the weakness or besetting sin of the sinful nature while emphasising the weakness or besetting sin of someone else.

9. Legalism condemns those who fail in their own area of strength but legalism does not recognise that all have sinned.

10. Sometimes legalism is so strong that it fulfils both categories of **1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10.**

11. To be guilty one only has to sin once not the thousands of times one does **(James 2:10)**

12. Legalism hinders rewards

    [a] Every believer has exactly the same position in Christ, the same assets and responsibilities except for spiritual gifts.

    [b] Faithfulness or the utilization of more grace is the basis of rewards

    [c] This means that legalism which is the enemy of grace will keep many prominent believers from rewards in eternity.

    [d] Legalism keeps the believer from depending on the filling of the Spirit which is the basis of divine production

    [e] Faithfulness not prominence is the basis of reward **Matthew 25:21**

MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

1. General Scripture: (**2 Thessalonians 2**).

2. The mystery of iniquity is the inherent evil which is personified in the lawless one. This "Cosmos" satanic system is being restrained by the Holy Spirit at the moment.

3. The mystery of iniquity was already at work at the time of writing of the epistle in 54 AD. (v 7)

4. There is going to be major apostasy in the professing church. This is pictured in the lukewarm church of Laodicea in (v 3 cf **Revelation 3:14-22**)

5. At some time in the future the restrainer is removed so that the mystery of iniquity can fully develop. (v 6-7)

6. It is noted that the restrainer is a person. The restrainer is the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit indwells all believers in this present age, when He is taken out of the way all believers will also be taken out of the way. This will occur at the Rapture of the Church. (v 7 cf **John 14:16-17, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17**)

7. The manifestation of the lawless one ,the Antichrist, will then occur.(v 8-10)

8. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the destruction of the lawless one and his dispatch to the Lake of Fire. (v 8)

9. The day of the Lord. (v 9-12)

NATIONS – DESTINY OF NATIONS

1. In the Scriptures there are four words used for the non-Jewish, non-church groups. They are nations, gentiles, people and heathen. They are distinguished from the Jews and Church (**1 Corinthians 10:32**).

2. There is a time of history called the times of the Gentiles.
   a) It began when God gave them world rulership **(Daniel 2:38; Jeremiah 27:6,7)**.
   b) It is fulfilled when Christ returns **(Luke 21:24)**.
   c) It ends when Christ sets up His kingdom **(Daniel 2:44; Revelation 11:15)**.
   It should not be confused with the Gentile or Family dispensation.

3. The destiny of nations is determined by their relationship:-
   a) their relationship to God **(Psalm 33:12)**.
   b) to the law **(Proverbs 14:34)**
   c) to Satan **(Isaiah 14:12,16)**
   d) to God's programme **(Acts 15:14)**
   e) to the Jews **(Genesis 12:3)**.

4. Prophetically, the destiny of nations is given as:
   a) Distress will come to them **(Matthew 24:12; Luke 21:25)**.
   b) Many will be saved during the Tribulation **(Revelation 7:9,14)**.
   c) War, famine and disease will affect them **(Matthew 24:7,22)**.
   d) A world ruler will rule all nations **(Revelation 13:7)**.
   e) All nations gather at Armageddon **(Zechariah 14:2; Revelation 16:13-16)**.
   f) Christ will return in judgement **(Revelation 19:11-21)**.
   g) Righteous Gentiles will enter His kingdom **(Matthew 25:31-34)**.
   h) Nations will serve Him **(Daniel 7:14)**.
   i) They continue into eternity **(Revelation 21:24-26)**.

SIN – ABOMINATION SINS TO THE LORD
(Satan's "Seven Deadly Sins" – his religious behavioural evils)

Proverbs 6:16-19 shows what God hates - the seven worst sins. God's hatred for immorality is well known, but even more God hates these seven sins.

1. Proud Look: God hates a proud look, a look of self righteousness, people who look down on others. God's justice is even more on his own where they have accepted His son yet still harbour sin. You may be in such a church. Or you may be in a church which has no immorality but they have many mental attitude sins.

2. Lying Tongue: Another sin pattern is lying tongues. These can consist of lying flatterers, lying pastors who should be teaching the truth but are not.

3. Hands that Shed Innocent Blood: Hands that shed innocent blood are those who murder including abortionists, drunken drivers, thugs, drug dealers and the wealthy doctors and lawyers who protect them.

4. Hearts that Devise Wicked Imaginations: Hearts that devise wicked imaginations, minds that are full of lust, they are thinking it all the time, lust for money, lust for power, lust for sex, full of anger and hatred, jealousy. It is very important to confess your sin.

5. Feet that are Swift to Run to Mischief: These are people who dwell on things that are wrong and explain it to people in great detail. These are voyeurs, people who lack the courage to do things themselves but love to see others wallow in it. People who look at pornography. It is people who gossip on the basis that you will pray more effectively.

6. False Witness: False witnesses are people who lie to injure the innocent.

7. Sowers of discord: These are those who have hidden agendas, they pervert and distort discussions.

SIN – CARNAL BELIEVER - CHARACTERISTICS - LOT

Lot, the nephew of Abraham, left Ur with him (**Genesis 11:31)**. His name means "secret self-seeking". He certainly lived up to his name. Satanic evil got hold of this man, and he gradually slipped away from fellowship with God to fellowship with demons – that is the satanic “game plan”, by carnality and unconfessed sin for the believer to slip away into gross sins, religious compromise and powerless social action.

Both Abraham and Lot had become very rich with so much cattle that they were unable to stay together because the land would not support the stock. **(Genesis 13:6)** This caused friction between the cowboys of Abraham and those of Lot **(Genesis 13:7)** which Abraham tries to defuse. **(Genesis 13:8)** Abraham now offers Lot first choice of grazing land **(Genesis 13:9)**.

Abraham had godly priorities – no lust for the material things, but Lot had entered into carnality and lust was getting hold of him – he wanted the pleasant and prosperous life rather than the godly obedient life.

Lot surveys the scene, sees the green valleys of the Jordan valley before him and decides to choose that area near Sodom. **(Genesis 13:11)**

Abraham decides to leave his choice with the Lord. Lot is selfish and self centred and eventually this causes his downfall. Abraham relies on the Lord and succeeds.

Principle: When you put your life in the hands of the Lord you will never be cheated or miss out. You never lose if you let God choose.

Lots slide into carnality and the “social gospel”.

Lot becomes a judge in Sodom. This is shown by the phrase "be sat in the gate" (Genesis 19:1). He does not separate from the most degenerate city on earth at that time.

Lot as the carnal believer shows various characteristics in (**Genesis 19**)

(a) He emphasises time rather than eternity. He emphasises reform rather than regeneration (social gospel). Most denominations preach a form of social gospel or reform rather than regeneration. Every time man tries to do this he falls, e.g. Communism. When man allows God to do it he has a time of revival and great prosperity. God stresses the individual.

(b) A believer out of fellowship has an unpleasant household and poor domestic life.(v. 2,3). The angels do not want to stay with him.

(c) A believer out of fellowship has no sense of responsibility. Because of the very low level of responsibility shown it shows low level of Christianity and establishment. (v.5-9) . Lot calls the men of Sodom "brethren" - they cannot be as they are unbelievers.

Principle: Believers imitate unbelievers when out of fellowship.

(d) A believer out of fellowship has no testimony with the unbeliever. (v. 14)

(e) The believer out of fellowship is disciplined but never judged (v.15-17, Romans 8:1, Hebrews 12:6)

(f) The believer out of fellowship faints mentally due to fear and worry. (v. 18,19)

(g) The believer out of fellowship has no resistance to any type of sin. (v.31-36). In this case it was the sins of drunkenness and incest.

SIN – OLD SIN NATURE

1. We are born with a nature, inherited from Adam, which is against God and prone to sin **(Ephesians 2:1, Romans 5:12)**.

2. The old sin nature is perpetuated in the human race by physical birth **(Psalm 51:5, 1 Timothy 2:13, 14)**.

3. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth **(Romans 5:12)**.

4. Names for the old sin nature:
   a) Flesh - **Galatians 5:16**
   b) Old Man - **Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9**
   c) Carnal - **Romans 7:14**
   d) Sin - **Romans 5:12**

   e) Heart - **Jeremiah 17:9**
   f) Member - **Colossians 3:5**.

5. The believer continues to have an old sin nature after salvation **(1 John 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:1)**.

6. The believer under the control of the old sin nature is called carnal **(Romans 7:14, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3)**.

7. The old sin nature frustrates true production of the Christian life **(Romans 7:15)**.

8. The old sin nature has two tendencies **(Romans 6:6)**
   a) Area of weakness - pushes us towards lawlessness and sins **(Hebrews 12:1)**
   b) Area of strength - pushes us towards asceticism and self-righteousness **(Isaiah 64:6)**.

9. The old sin nature is not found in the resurrection body **(1 Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:23)**.

10. Victory over the old sin nature is achieved by considering your old life dead, surrendering to God, confessing sin and relying upon the filling of the Spirit **(Romans 6:6,11, Colossians 3:9-10)**.

SIN – OLD SIN NATURE, FRUIT OF

1. The fruit of the old sin nature falls under four categories **(Galatians 5:19-21)**
   (a) Sensual
   (b) Religious
   (c) Social
   (d) Personal

2. SENSUAL
   (a) fornication – porneia – illicit sexual activity or any sexual activity other than with your partner.

(b) uncleanness - akatharsia - all acts of indecency and uncleanliness that shock people, this includes abnormal sexual acts.

(c) lasciviousness - aselgeia - unrestrained lust - people who are having sex for their own personal gratification, treating other people as sexual objects for their pleasure. Paul recognises that we are tempted in all these areas. Matthew points out that it is not only the doing of these acts but the thinking of these acts which are sins.

3. RELIGIOUS
(a) idolatry - eidoltria - worship of things other than God

(b) witchcraft - pharmakeia - this involved magic, astrology, séances and sorcery.

(c) hatred -echtros - this is unrestrained rage without a reason. You get so angry that no one can talk to you at all.

(d) strife - eris - contentiousness - this is argumentation in regard to Bible teaching and spiritual matters.

4. SOCIAL
(a) jealousy - zelos - a bitter hatred towards another person who has something that you want. This is the father of all the other sins.

(b) wrath - thermos - this is getting hot headed or flaring up. If the person does not control the power of a hot temper they are under the power of the old sin nature and not the Holy Spirit. If you get this type of trouble at a church meeting you turn to the Word of God.

(c) seditions - - this is faction forming

(d) heresies - this is one step forward from seditions and is a person who wishes to build on the factions. An example would be the KJV group. By separating on the basis of the KJV alone you have fallen into far more evil than is present in variations in the versions.

(e) evil - this is tied into jealousy eating away at the souls of people who harbour resentment.

5. PERSONAL
(a) drunkenness - methai - drinking alcohol to excess is not a sickness it is a sin. It is an inherited weakness, if your father is an alcoholic you should not touch alcohol at all because it is a weakness in the family. Avoid places where you could be tempted. If you have a weakness towards alcoholism you must deal with it.

(b) revellings - jomoi - which means hell raising, a person who cannot bear silence but has to be drowned in noise all the time. Their life is empty and has no purpose but as long as they party vigorously and run from function to function they do not have to worry about their sin and the pointlessness of their life. When you are tempted to sin think about the Lord. Paul now adds and such like which means that if he has not hit their particular weakness they should fill in the blanks.

6. We all have weaknesses and unless you are on guard you fall every time. You have to ascertain your weakness and set your guard against it. God's way is to walk in the Spirit that is the way to deal with it.

UNBELIEVER

1. God is Holy and cannot compromise with sin or evil. **(Psalm 22:1-3, John 1:5)**

2. Sin is solved at the Cross for all. **(1 John 2:2)**

3. The way is therefore open to all who will believe. **(John 3:16,36, Acts 16:31)**

4. Those who reject Christ are without hope, promise and God in the world. **(Ephesians 2:12, Romans 5:14,17, 6:23)**

5. We are born dead to God. **(Psalm 51:5)**

6. It is only through Christ that we can be born again. **(John 14:6)**

7. The unbeliever spurns this grace offer and the Lord who died for him. **(Hebrews 2:1-4)**

8. God is Love, but when love is spurned, that person has chosen darkness rather than light. They are therefore judged on the basis of their works as they have rejected the Lord's work for them. **(John 3:16-21, Revelation 20:11-15)**

9. The first stop for the unbeliever after death is Torments in Hades or Sheol . This is a place of regret, torment and anguish. It is also called the bottomless pit. **(Revelation 9:2)**

10. Their ultimate state is the Lake of Fire after they have been judicially sentenced to it by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Last Judgement where they are judged according to their works. **(Revelation 14:11, 20:11-15, Matthew 8:12, 25:41, Mark 9:44, Jude 13)**

WORLD

1. World under control of Satan:

   a) ruler of this world **(John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)**

   b) god of this world **(2 Corinthians 4:4)**

   c) he deceives the world **(Revelation 12:9)**.

   d) Satan is filling the world with his propaganda **(1 Timothy 4:1)**.

2. Jesus Christ created earth (**Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18)**. He gave control to original mankind (Genesis 1:28) but man lost it at the fall **(Genesis 3:6)**.

3. Sin and spiritual death are the basis of Satan's rule over this world. Therefore, God so loved the world that He gave a Saviour **(John 3:16)**, hence Christ as a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world **(John 8:12; 9:5)**.

4. Therefore Christ is the saviour of the world **(John 3:17; 4:42; 1 John 4:14)**. The Saviour who gave His life for the' world (John 6:33); hence Christ has a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world **(John 8:12; 9:5).**

5. Therefore Christ has overcome the world **(John 16:33)**, so that the believer can overcome the world (**1John 5:4,5**).

6. Consequently believers in Christ must not love the world **(1 John 2:15-16)**. Nor must believers conform to the world (Romans 12:2). Worldliness is what you think, which may be demonstrated by what you do.

7. World control by Satan will stop at the Second Advent. However, believers will continue forever **(1 John 2:17)**.

8. Also, the Word of God abides forever (**1 Peter 1:23, 25**), and is designed to overcome the ruler of this world (**1John 2:14**). Therefore, not conforming to the world and overcoming the world are accomplished through Bible doctrine, by which God has made foolish the wisdom of the world (**1 Corinthians 1:20; 3:19**).

9. It is therefore of greatest importance that the believer's attitude is based on the Word of God **(Philippians 2:5; 2Timothy 1:7; Isaiah 26:3,4; Philippians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2Corinthians 1:5,6,8).**

10. Backsliding is characterised as friendship with the world **(James 4:4)**.

WORLDLINESS

1. Worldliness means to follow the beliefs and philosophy of man rather than that of God

2. Worldliness is the opposite of godliness; it is thinking/doing in opposition to God's revealed word. **Titus 2:11-14.**

3. All people are faced with the constant choice of following God's way or the world's. **Romans 5:12, 3:19, 1 Corinthians 1:21, Ephesians 2:12, James 1:27, 2 Peter 1:4, 2:20.**

4. Satan is the "prince of this world", and has power to deceive those who are negative to God's plans. **John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8,9.**

5. We must not love the world, **1 John 2:15-17.**

6. We must hate all the world stands for, in thought and in deed. **1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 11:30-32, Galatians 6:14, James 1:27, James 4:4, 2 Peter 1:3,4, 1 Corinthians 3:18, 19**.

7. We must not return to our old behaviour patterns, **Ephesians 2:1-7.**

8. This evil world system and the prince of this world will be condemned. **Matthew 18:7, John 12:31, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 6:2, 2 Peter 3:7, 2 Peter 2:1ff.**

Philippians 4:1-13. ***"1. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.***
2. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.
3. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life.
4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.
5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.
6. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
7. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.
9. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.
10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.
11. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.
12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.
13. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Thanksgiving is appropriate for all spiritual believers as we end this study, for Satan is defeated, and our job now is to seriously insult him daily, by our worship, work and witness in the Holy Spirit's power.

Understand his hatred of you, John 15:18ff, but live exulting the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we do that by obedient Holy Spirit filled and protected living.

LIST OF DOCTRINES

APPENDIX

ANGELIC CONFLICT CASE STUDY – THE APPEARANCES OF THE ANGEL AT FATIMA

The Fatima Visions/Appearances in 1917

Three young peasant children "saw" an incredibly beautiful being, presenting itself as a woman, appearing dressed and looking like the statues of Mary in the local parish churches. This "being" appeared in a series of visions outside the village of Fatima, to the north of Lisbon in Portugal, between May and October of 1917. They described the being as appearing with "brightest light shining,…. almost blinding".

The proximity of the visions to the Bolshevik Revolution in November of 1917, the entry of America into the First World War, making the war a true "world war", and the Balfour Declaration on 2 November, all make their timing significant. Given the significance of this year within a "Pre-Tribulation" Theological Viewpoint, there are questions that must be seriously asked of these visions.

Even if the pre-tribulational prophetic framework is rejected, the thoughtful church historian must reflect upon their significance for Church Union and the role of the Catholic Church in that, and the role of Mary for all the churches.

1. Are these appearances distractions from what is really happening through this period?
2. Are they a true and genuine "sign of the end" to be heeded by all?
3. Are they significant regarding the role of Mary in the Universal Church?
4. Or are they a deceptive sign by an angel/demon to lead mankind into the religion of the final world ruler, until the setting up of his image and the sweeping away of all other religions? Revelation 17ff.

From the Pre-Tribulation viewpoint of Biblical prophetic revelation these visions may have great significance. As the Lord's words recorded in **Matthew 24:4-8** make clear, the occurrence of World Wars is a clear sign of the "beginning of sorrows", leading to the events of the last days as laid out in Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel, Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Revelation. Ezekiel records a series of visions that are now partially fulfilled with the return of Israel to the land, but He reveals also an invasion of the land by specific people groups that has not occurred since the days of Nebuchadnezzar. If this series of visions is indeed to be taken literally then it casts a serious shadow over the things described in the Fatima Visions.

Ezekiel records, using the words of his day, that Persia/Iran, with some of the old Scythian people groups of the old "Russian Empire" area support, will be the main protagonists behind a great invasion of the Middle East before the final world ruler (Anti-Christ) takes power, indeed this invasion appears to "set the scene" for later acceptance of the concept of centralized control of the world, and a single "world ruler", so desperate are men to avoid more carnage. It is a horrific vision of a war that leads to the deaths of hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions, of people.

Given the significance of the Balfour Declaration on 2 November 1917, relating to the establishment of the nation Israel again (another "end sign" and referred to in Ezekiel 38) we must be very careful in analysis of the content and intent of these visions at Fatima. They are clearly real, and a thorough study of the facts surrounding them lead to the inescapable conclusion that there is no reasonable doubt in their reality. Wikipedia and many atheist groups have desperately tried to discredit them, but all explanations fall short of motive and fact.

There are simply too many pieces of evidence to indicate that the children truly "saw" these visions and heard the content, which they faithfully recorded and recounted. The only question then is, "Do the messages of these visions have godly purposes, or are they great deceptions or distractions for the last days?"

The vision of this being (appearing as a woman looking like a Catholic Church statue of the Virgin Mary), appeared to the children six times between 13 May and 13 October 1917. Before these occurred, an "angel of light" (appearing as a man and calling himself, "the Angel of Peace", and the "Angel/Prince of Portugal") had appeared to them at the well, and warned them that the visions would come to them over the next months. Biblically we know that any appearance of an angel is to be taken very seriously, as they are rare, and their appearance means a special thing is about to be announced.

When an angel appears to mankind great care is to be taken to ensure that this is not any form of demonic manifestation of the "angel of light", deceiving people into thinking "he/she" is from God and yet the message does not have the hallmark indicators that they are. Once such an appearance has occurred and is certified as real, it is to be tested with reference to the Scriptures as to its origin.

Given the warning of **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**, Angelic visitors are always to be carefully checked out. Each nation has a demonic prince assigned to it, as we read in **Daniel 10:20**, and as is indicated in Jesus Temptation from the Devil as recorded in **Matthew 4:8-11**. The "Prince of Portugal" may be the demon associated with that nation, holding it under satanic influence if he can, or he may be a genuine angel of the Lord. Who is this angel? As Jesus said, "We know them by their fruits". Let us check this being's words and see what unfolds!

The angel taught the children a prayer. "My G/god, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love you. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you." Examine this prayer in light of **James 2:19**, for the demonic forces all know who Jesus truly is and affirm its truth, but will not worship Him as Lord, Savior and King of kings. Does this prayer go far enough in what it says? Do these words indicate the angelic being truly worships the Lord Jesus as Saviour, Lord and King, as we see in all the biblical places where angels appear and worship the Lord?

The phrase, "My god", could be Satan himself – the term is deliberately generic rather than specific as biblical angels always are. The world ruler/Anti-Christ figure will claim to be "God". Satan himself is described as one who desires worship as "God". As we have seen above, he hates atheism, as he wants to be seen as "god". Satan's fall centres in his desire to be worshipped as GOD. **Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:1-19**. The Lord is always the "Lord God", Almighty God, not ever a diminutive.

Daniel and the Apostle John both record the "World Ruler" figure's claim to be "God" and his demand for worship from all the earth.

Check in your concordance for all appearances and worship by angels in Genesis, Joshua, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Gospels, and the Revelation! This angel doesn't "ring true" when "his" words are compared with biblical recorded ones. There is a sense that something "not right" is occurring here when he is compared with biblical angelic appearances. This is not enough for rejection, but for caution. Remember the "beings" appearing, do so as men or women, but they are "beings" who adopt a shape – it is not necessarily their reality at all. They are from eternity and enter space and time, and so great care is needed by us, as we are space-time limited creatures.

The vision of the beautiful "being/woman" then appeared as predicted, and spoke with the children on several occasions, and that "being" taught them various things. This is a real being – but who is it? This also may be a demonic spirit – for they can take any shape but will adopt the shape best suited to deceive – and as we will discuss below "her" description is not of a Jewish Mary – the true earthly mother of the Lord Jesus, and great mentor of faith in the early church. "Her" physical appearance is that of the old pagan goddesses of Greece and Rome and earlier. "Her" words are even more problematic than her physical appearance. She emphasized to the children the importance of "acts of reparation and prayers to console Jesus for the sins of the world".

One of the children, Lucia, later said the angelic vision told them, "When you make some sacrifice, say, O Jesus it is for your love, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate heart of Mary". Reflect upon these words, for they are certified as really "heard", so what do they mean? Does this accord with Scripture, and does it tie in with the Lord's words on the Cross? There is absolutely no reparation for sins since Calvary! **John 19:30**. These words appear to reflect the content of the dogmas of Medieval Catholicism not Apostolic Christianity, nor even modern post Vatican 2 Catholicism!

Lucia also records that the vision said, "Most Holy Trinity I adore you, my God, my God, I love you in the most blessed sacrament……..O my Jesus, pardon us, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need." Later Popes would identify the sins as being, "acts of injustice, and a lack of charity towards the poor, widows and orphans, the ignorant and the helpless".

Once again I am being "picky", because we are ordered to be so, **1 John 4:1ff**. This prayer taught by this being is simply **not an apostolic or biblical prayer**, even to the address "my Jesus". Also the point must be made that we do not, "love the Lord in the Bread and wine", but in his place in our life, and as Creator, Saviour and King, seated at the right hand of the Father in Majesty!

The Lord Jesus himself tells the disciples how to pray. **Matthew 6:9-13**. Prayer is addressed to "Our Father", the Almighty God our Heavenly Father, in the name of the only Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ. He adds to this early teaching many things recorded in **John Chapters 14-16** especially, but also in many other places. Even Thomas, who was used to calling Jesus as "Jesus", dropped to his knees seeing the Lord after His Resurrection and said, "My Lord and my God". **John 20:28-31**. It is as if this visionary creature the children see doesn't know, or want to emphasize the words of Jesus before, or after the Cross and Resurrection! There is nothing in the words given to the children that takes us back to the words of the real historic Jesus who ministered and died, let alone the words of the risen Lord Jesus after his resurrection.

The three cousins Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco were all around nine years of age and so we know they are under God's grace, and forgiveness for anything like the deception that may have been practiced here. They didn't know the Holy Scripture, only the stories told by the priest and the things they saw in the statues in the local churches. Their salvation and heavenly destiny is assured if there is any deception here, for they were guiltless of any malice or fraud; they just reported what they had seen. Jesus strongest words are directed at those (man or demon) who deceives, abuses or hurts children in any way, and we can be sure these little girls went to the arms of the real Jesus. **Matthew 19:13ff**.

Two died shortly afterwards in the flu epidemic of 1918, having announced before the epidemic begins, that the vision had told them they would "go to heaven" shortly, but that Lucia would live long. Lucia did indeed live long, living as a nun until 2005, and she died at age 97. The children recognized the vision of the being as looking like the local statues of the Virgin Mary, and her title was later announced as, "Our Lady of Fatima", or "Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Fatima".

Two million pilgrims visited the hastily erected 'shrine" by the late 1920s. The present enormous church was erected in the 1930s, with the money that poured in from pilgrims and sales of "holy water" from the well where the first angelic being appeared, and the two dead children were interred there in the church, and the papal blessing given by Pius XII on 13 May 1946. Some subsequent Popes have blessed the site, and recognized the vision as real and worship at the site has been "officially" sanctioned, even if the content of the visions is not fully accepted by the Vatican.

Pope John Paul II dedicated the whole world to the Virgin Mary in 1984. It is not clear whether this means her protection, or her ownership, and many things surrounding Fatima are left very vague at this point. **Matthew 4:8-10** challenges the whole concept of Mary's ownership of the world, for she is in heaven with all the saints, and she is cheering us on, as are all the saints. **Hebrews 12:1.** We must be very careful here – the Lord Jesus Rules in heaven and will rule over the earth and He alone rules as Saviour, Lord and King.

Three visions were given to the girls – with three sets of instructions to be followed through upon by them, and all others in the entire world. These were announced as world saving or world losing/destroying visions.

1. Vision of Hell – 13 July 1917. Remedy – the children are told to pray for the souls of those in hell to release them.

2. Russia was to become the source of great evil that would affect the whole world. Within a month of the last vision, in November that year the Russian revolution occurs and Russia disappears under evil communism until the 1990s when the system collapses. Remedy – the children were to dedicate Russia to the "Immaculate heart of Mary". She would defeat the evils of communism and atheism in Russia and stop the world's slide into evil from the "infection and corruption" that would flow from Russia. Lucia reported that the being in the vision, "told us that God had chosen to use Russia as the instrument of chastisement to punish the whole world if we did not, by our prayers, and sacrifices, obtain conversion of Russia to the Catholic faith……..if my requests are not granted Russia will spread her errors throughout the world raising up wars and persecutions against the Church, the good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated."

3. The "secret" vision of the death of a future Pope and Religious Leaders. This last vision was only released by the Vatican on 26 June 2000. It foretold the death of a future Pope and other world religious leaders. The vision unfolds with the appearance of an angel with flaming sword who comes upon the earth calling for "Penance, penance, penance". The Virgin Mary with power flowing from her right hand then stills the angel and the vision unfolded from there. The children saw the vision of the later Pope and other world religious leaders who were in a procession under great suffering and duress, and they climb a blasted hill through a ruined city, praying over the corpses there for the souls of the dead lying around the streets. As the Pope and the other religious leaders pray at the foot of a roughly made cross at the top of the hill they are killed by a group of soldiers by "bullets and arrows".

Angels take the blood of these martyrs to heaven. The called for remedy is unclear – it would appear to be the call to the Catholic Church world wide to preach the devotion of all to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who is the one with the heavenly power.

Is this last vision an advance preparation for the events described in Revelation 17-18, when so called "Ecclesiastical Babylon" is destroyed by the evil world ruler, the so called "Anti-Christ"? As interpreted in a pre-tribulational literal hermeneutics, Revelation paints a picture of the last days before the Lord's return, of organized religious groups, probably under a Pope figure, supporting the Anti-Christ, who thoroughly deceives them and their followers. At the point that the Anti-Christ sets up his idol in the temple in Jerusalem the "gloves are off" and he executes all religious leaders and slaughters their followers. At that point he murders all who do not then worship him alone. At that point all followers of all religions realize too late that they have been "used" by the evil one, and they all die martyr's deaths.

If the Pre-Tribulational interpretation of Scripture is correct, then this vision given to the children will physically occur, for we have it described by Daniel and Revelation, but a question remains. In the form this "revelation" comes to the girls, does it have deceptive purposes for the middle days of the Tribulation period? Is this the satanic way of preparing the ground for his later actions? At that mid-point in the Tribulation period the world ruler/Anti-Christ sets up his own statue in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and all other religions are persecuted from that point onwards.

If this vision from Fatima is accepted by the majority as "true", then the Anti-Christ figure can say at the time of launching his great and world wide persecution of all religion, "all this was seen by the girls at Fatima and its ok, these religious people had to go, they didn't get the real truth so I killed them, they deceived you all, but I am still god, and I am still in control, and so worship me alone now". As it is the Vatican has interpreted this last prophetic word as fulfilled by the attempted assassination of the last Pope in St Peter's square but it clearly doesn't have any reference to that at all.

Historic Way-points since 1917

1952 – Pius XII said of Mary, "The gates of hell will never prevail where she offers her protection. She is the good mother, the mother of all, and it has never been heard that those who seek her protection, will not receive it…. Error and atheism will be overcome with her assistance and divine grace."

2010 – Benedict XVI stated that he believed in the, "triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary relating it to the final glory of the Most Holy Trinity." What "holy trinity" is he speaking of here. There is no Holy Spirit mentioned, except as a spirit of God, but increasingly it appears to be for some, "Father, Mother and Son".

2017 – The 100th anniversary from May to October(below).

Testing all visions according to prophetic rules (Doctrine Below).

1 John 4:1-4 is always to be applied to all angelic and human visions; they are to be tested as to "origin" by reference to the Scriptures alone.

What is seen is to be tested against real historic fact in the revelation of the activities of the Lord and the Apostles, (the Gospel events and events occurring as the church is established in Acts) and other clear biblical teaching. **Jude 3**.

The key passage for us is always **Matthew 7:13-23**. Of all movements, and statements we ask about the result of "faith/belief in them" in the lives of those affected-influenced by them. Is the "fruit" of the visions/events godly, or does it lead people away from biblical truth, biblical revelation, and genuine biblical salvation?

We need always to ask of all prophetic-visionary revelation, if this is believed and acted upon, what will happen to the churches by way of mission activity, and what will not happen? What biblical truth is lost or obscured by this, or what is amplified and brought to the front of the minds of all?

The two biblical "Doctrines" below are the relevant ones to study and apply when we face the Fatima Visions/appearances. There is no doubt that they are real spiritual appearances, as the girls genuinely saw the visions/appearances, and so the content of the visions are to be judged for origin by their "fruit", and it is all open to scrutiny in this case. Is this the cleverest satanic deception for the last days or a genuine call to arms for the churches?

The Three Visions.

The **first vision of hell** is clearly deceptive, and a deviation from scripture, as once people have died rejecting the Lord as their Saviour there are no prayers for them, for their fate eternally is settled by their life time of multiple choices to reject the claims of the Lord, their Creator and Saviour upon them. To ask for prayers for the dead is to waste time, and teach a "second chance" gospel that is biblically without warrant, and so deemed to be dangerous and "false". This undermines the importance of evangelism and could be seen as a definite satanic strategy. This fact will be reinforced by papal statements in 2017.

The **second vision** covers prophetically the reality of the impact of communism, and certainly was semi-accurately foretold, although Communism collapses in Russia due to the actions of a protestant president of the USA, not any Catholic involvement, nor impact of Catholic or Marian "evangelism" by devotion to the rosary. Is the vision referring to the yet future actions of the Iranian and Southern Russian confederacy invasion of the Middle East as described in Ezekiel 38-39? The approximate accuracy of the prophetic words would give them credence to many, and possibly open the door to an increased "authority" of those who teach these visions are "vital for mankind's survival", especially in the eyes of those who do not read the Holy Scriptures thoroughly.

A Pre-Tribulational view of Daniel, Ezekiel 38-39, Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Revelation, indicate that the Fatima teachings may be very sinister indeed, but few today study these books with a literal hermeneutic. If people have been brought up in any church where there is no expectancy that biblical prophecy is to be literally fulfilled, then the acceptance of the truth of the Fatima visions would open them to deception that could prove fatal to their faith, life, or both.

The instructions of the "being" in the vision are not biblical in the slightest. Remember the vision appears to be female, but if it is angelic/demonic that is simply the "appearance, not the reality. Remember also, the rosary was only introduced into medieval Catholicism from the Arab Moslem world, and has no part in apostolic faith or practise. The doctrine of Mary as "Mother of God" has been controversial from its entry into the post-apostolic Roman Church's history, and the "Immaculate Conception of Mary", her "Immaculate Heart", and described position as "Queen of Heaven" are modern inventions from the 1850s, the 1870s with only some Pope's support of them afterwards.

These titles used, "our Mother", or "Mother/Queen of Heaven", are also sadly pagan titles of the demon-queens of the goddesses from the pagan past and they openly appear in Jeremiah's day. Check any biblical Concordance for references. The worship of the "queen of heaven" was a sign of Israel's apostacy at the time, and the people of Israel were judged by their offering of grain, wine and cakes to the "queen of heaven". **Jeremiah 7:18, 44:17-25**. We are rightly to be nervous when phrases used of the real and blessed Mary, the greatest of all women, are those condemned as pagan in the Scriptures. Mary is to be honoured, but she cannot be biblically honoured by assigning to her titles condemned as dangerously pagan 600 years before her birth!

The real Mary, the mother of the humanity of our Lord, was a great believer, an amazing woman of faith, who is certified by Scripture as the greatest of all women who has ever lived! Mary is truly the "Mother of the Faithful", for she is the perfect mentor for all women as to her obedience and devotion. **She is the greatest of all women ever**, and her obedience to the angelic messages regarding her pregnancy opens the door to the birth of the Lord Jesus and the eventual removal of the cost of the Fall that Eve and Adam began. She is the Second Eve indeed, and through the Lord Jesus what Adam and Eve lost is restored with grace abundantly! Mary is to be honoured as a mentor of genuine and heroic faith! She prays for us and cheers us on every day from heaven, with all the other saints. We have the Scripture telling us that **Hebrews 12:1-2**.

Mary is however **not to be worshipped** – and she is not to be disgraced by titles that are always in biblical history pagan rather than godly! The title "Our Lady" is sadly the ancient pagan title for the goddesses (read demons) Semiramis, Diana, Rhea, Artemis, and Astarte in the past and this title has the "feel" of some very evil origins, and has been in past history intimately involved in pagan religious worship of the demonic in the fertility religions that are satanic in origin.

Alexander Hislop's Book, "The Two Babylons", while going way too far in places with its Anti-Catholicism, accurately traces the origins of much of the idolatry and Mariolatry of the Medieval Catholic church to its clear pagan source. In our "Google Days" it provides a good single source of references to the statues from the ancient world that can be searched and identified, and with all his references easily and quickly checked.

Pagan titles dishonour the historic Mary, who is to be seen biblically as our mentor, and the “mother” and example/mentor of all who live in faith!

The vision of “our lady of Fatima” was, as described by the girls, of a very “Diana/Artemis” type woman, blond, blue eyed, blue robed, beautiful, and radiating light, with the pagan “nimbus” of light around the head, signifying the pagan sun-god. The vision appears like all the late medieval Roman Catholic statues, and like the earlier “Madonna and Child” statues from the pagan past, and the beautiful goddess statues of the pagan Roman and Greek periods. This is not anything like the Jewish earthly mother of the humanity of the Lord Jesus! Its’ appearance has clear similarities to all the beautiful pagan goddesses of the ancient world of all the ancient cultures. All the alarm bells are ringing here! This is not the historic Mary of the Holy Scriptures and Early Church History.

Note “her” (remember angelic beings adopt shapes - this is not a woman at all) reported words above, and check the websites for others, and you will look in vain for any reference to the genuine Gospel Message of salvation. You will find lots of references to religious practices that enter Catholicism in the later Medieval period; rosaries, masses for the dead, prayers for the dead, prayers for those caught in purgatory or hell, prayers for peace when Jesus words are clear that there will be “wars and rumours of wars until the end”…..

Assess these visions/appearances and the later ones in Croatia in 1981 in terms of the following two biblical doctrines.

DOCTRINE OF PROPHECY

1. The gift of prophecy and the office of the prophet are distinguished in Scripture. In the Old Testament there were those who had the office of prophet, and served in an official capacity within the worship system of Israel but there were also those who at times were given the gift of prophecy to give a special prophecy even though they were not full time prophets. Elijah was a man with the office and the gift, where-as David had the gift at times but not the office.

2. The roles of the person with the office of prophet were many and varied:
(a) - Aaron was a preacher Exodus 7:1
(b) - In Nehemiah's time the prophet-preacher had a role to exegete the Word of God clearly so that the people would know the truth. Nehemiah 6:7, Hosea 6:5.
(c) - As revivalists they were to call people to repentance. Judges 6:7-12, Zechariah 7:7-12.
(d) - They were to oppose apostasy, so that those who were likely to be misled by a false teacher would have no excuse. 1 Kings 18:36-39, 40, 2 Chronicles 25:15 Ezekiel 2:5, 2 Kings 20:11.
(e) - They were encouragers of the people. Ezra 5:2.
(f) - They were sometimes song/worship leaders for the people. 1 Samuel 10:5.
(g) -They led in prayer at worship. 2 Chronicles 32:20.
(h) - They were the advisers to the kings and they were associated with coronations. 1 Samuel 10:1, 1 Kings 11:28, 29, 2 Kings 9:1-6, 2 Chronicles 12:5, 2 Chronicles 12:6, 15:2-7.
(i) - They were spiritual advisers or seers for the kings; they "saw" the immediate future and so were able to advise the kings of the right decisions. 1 Samuel 9:9, 2 Samuel 24:11, 1 Chronicles 21:9, 24:29, 2 Chronicles 19:2, 33:18, 2 Kings 17:13, Isaiah 29:10,
(j) - They were fore-tellers of significant future events. 2 Samuel 7:5-16, Amos 9:11, Isaiah 9:6,7, Isaiah 53, Ezekiel 34:22ff, Micah 5:2, Daniel 9:26, Zechariah 13:8, Joel, Zechariah 14, and many more.
(k) - God intended them to be the shepherds and vine-dressers of the nation. As such they were to be the type of Christ who is referred to in the Old Testament as "the great prophet". Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Zechariah 13:5,6, Matthew 21:11, Luke 7:16, 8:18-20, 24:19,23-26, John 7:40,41.

3. The Methodology of the prophets. There was no "set" formula for the prophets to follow, but certain things were established as **"tests" for the people to be sure the prophet and “prophetic word” was genuine.**
(a) - The prophet had to have a spiritual life witness that was like Moses. Deuteronomy 34:10-12.
(b) - God spoke to the prophets by dreams and visions. God spoke to Moses face to face but he was an exception. Numbers 12:6-7.
(c) - The prophet had to be totally confident of his/her message, as he/she was judged by God if there was any falsehood in it. 1Kings 22:13,14, 2 Kings 5:8.
(d) - There were to be no secret prophecies, everything was to be open and clear, so that all the people might be warned of God. Jeremiah 23:25-29.
(e) - The prophet had to be specific in his/her message and had to be obeyed literally. 2Ki 5:10-19, note especially verse 13.

4. There were always false prophets; in fact the great prophets of the Old Testament were **always outnumbered by false prophets in their own day**. Jeremiah 2:8, Ezekiel 13:1-23.

Our Lord warned us that there will always be false prophets about. Matthew 7:15-23. These words by the Lord are sobering indeed and are to be heeded in the Fatima situation – as the “fruit” of the vision’s acceptance is to be tested.

Note. The Lord's Words here in that the personal walk of the prophet is to be paid attention to, and that “person” here is the angelic being who appears.
No spiritual fruit in their life = no truth in their words.
God allows the false prophets to operate without immediate judgement upon them, so that believers of all ages, like the Exodus Generation, are always presented with an obedience test. We are always challenged by truth/Falsehood - to see whether we will obey the Scriptures or follow our own lusts to judgement.
False prophets will abound at times of poor Bible teaching. Weeds only grow in poorly cared for soil. Hosea 4:5,6, 9:7,8.

5. **Tests that believers must apply** when confronting a person claiming the gift of prophecy, and applied to every “prophetic word” spoken also.
(a) - The words of the prophet will never contradict the Word of God. Jeremiah 23:33-36, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1Cor 14:32.
(b) - The prophet will never call people away from genuine worship of God. Deuteronomy 13:1-5.
(c) - The prophet will always be specific and the prophecy will be able to be tested. Deuteronomy 18:20-22, Jeremiah 28:9.
(d) - Any prophet who asked for money was to be treated as false. Jeremiah 8:10.
(e) - Any prophet who was a drunkard was to be treated as false. Micah 2:11.
(f) - Any unconfessed sin of envy, jealousy, strife, etc in their life, they were false! Jeremiah 23:11.
(g) - If they were found only in groups they were probably false, as God's prophets were men alone. 1 Kings 22:5-8, 18:22.
(h) - Does the prophecy accord with Scripture (this is more than just not contradict) especially in this case above in terms of the Gospel message? 1 Corinthians 14:37,38, 2 Kings 23:2.

Apply Point 5 above especially to the Visions of Fatima, and I would argue that whether we are Pre-Tribulation, or theologically reject literal hermeneutics, that we will all conclude these visions are worrying and violate nearly all points above.

BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT ON “RELIGION” AS AGAINST RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST BY FAITH THROUGH GRACE.

1. Satan's religion is a humanly acceptable one: no sin, no judgement, no Saviour needed, and either no Hell, or one that the “prayers of the saints” could deliver you from later on. Luke 16:19-31. Satan appears as an angel of light, and his angels (demons) resemble the pagan “gods” and often counterfeit “light”. (2 Corinthians 11:13-19, 26.) He always pushes an “alternative policy” to that revealed in Holy Scripture. He wants people without any second chance at all to believe that they will have one – then they will have no worries…. And join him in eternal judgment, that they think either doesn't exist, or that they can escape.

2. Many pastors in the churches are servants of Satan's policy, knowingly or unknowingly by teaching nonsense. (Isaiah 30:12, Jeremiah 2:8, 2 Peter 2:1-10)

3. Satan's strategy towards unbelievers is to keep them blinded to the true gospel message, thinking it is unnecessary or exaggerated in its demand for salvation before death. (John 3:16-36, Acts 4:12, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Colossians 2:8, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10.)

4. Satan's strategy towards believers is:-
a) To confuse by false teaching. (Matthew 7:15, Romans 16:18)
b) To appeal to pride. (2 Corinthians 10:12)
c) To promote idolatry. (Habakkuk 2:18,19)
d) To promote legalism. (1 Timothy 1:7-8)

5. Satan's policy calls for counterfeit faith that doesn't save, but holds people in deception until they drop into Hell itself:-
a) Counterfeit gospel. (2 Corinthians 11:3-4)

b) Counterfeit pastors. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
c) Counterfeit communion. (1 Corinthians 10:19-21)
d) Counterfeit doctrine. (2 Timothy 4:1)
e) Counterfeit righteousness. (Matthew 19:16-28)
f) Counterfeit way of life. (Matthew 23)
g) Counterfeit power. (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)
h) Counterfeit gods. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

The 100th Anniversary Celebrations of the Fatima Visions 12-13 May 2017

Pope Francis has put all his considerable energy and intellect into the repackaging of the Fatima Phenomenon as a crucial part of Catholic Dogma at the 100th anniversary of these apparitions. The "apparitions" are now openly accepted by the Vatican and certified as real, with the canonization of the two children who died being completed on the 100th Anniversary, and the process for the canonization of Lucia well advanced, probably to be completed in October.

Pope Francis has been careful to mix his words in each speech given on Fatima, and he is presenting two viewpoints of Mary in these, allowing each wing of Catholicism to be able to take some of his words to support themselves. Many remain uncomfortable with the thought of Mary being spoken of as almost divine, as "Mother of God".

Pope Francis has been as careful as we would expect of a well trained Jesuit and he has covered each base well, but we are left with the truth being lost, for he has skilfully moved the discussion away from the content of the "apparitions" and made them to be generic and spiritual, and all prophetic words received fulfilled and so able to be calmly put aside, leaving the people with the pleasant rituals at the "holy site".

Let us look at his words as reported by Vatican Radio and study them carefully to see the direction he is guiding the Roman Catholic Church, for it affects future discussions of all church union.

The first, and crucial point about the Pope's words is that he accepts that the apparition is truly of Mary, the earthly mother of the humanity of the Lord Jesus, rather than challenging this on the basis of the words spoken and the appearance of the "woman" in the vision. Having accepted the apparitions as of the real Mary, from Heaven, he doesn't quote the words of the "being", rather he focused the discussion upon the proper attitude towards Mary by all believers. The early part of the week leading to the Fatima event highlighted important points.

8 May 2017. Pope Francis preaching at morning Mass at Casa Santa Marta Chapel challenged all to open their hearts to new things, and not try to lock the future into the past. He noted, "the phrase, 'It has always been done like this', shuts and resists the Holy Spirit, and this kills freedom, kills joy, kills fidelity to the Holy Spirit who always acts in advance and carries the church forward"…….. "Faith, he stressed, never changes, it is always the same. But it broadens and grows into a movement….the Pope concluded urging those present to ask for the grace of discernment in order not to mistake the path and be trapped in immobility, rigidity and closing of the heart."

9 May 2017. He calls the faithful to, "Receive the Word with docility". "The first path in the journey of docility is therefore to receive the Word which opens the heart. The second path is to know the Word, to know Jesus, who says, 'my sheep listen to my voice', I know them and they follow me'. Then there is the third path, familiarity with the Word, to always bring the Word with us. To read it, to open our hearts to the Lord, open our hearts to the Spirit who makes us understand the Word. And the fruit of this, to receive the Word, to understand the Word, to take it with us, to have this familiarity with the Word, is a great fruit. A person who does this displays goodness, kindness, joy, peace, self control and meekness".

11 May 2017. At the morning homily at Mass Pope Francis spoke of the "journey to salvation", "a journey populated by saints and sinners on the road towards fullness, towards the encounter with the Lord".
"Each of us is on the way to the fullness of our own time. Each of us will reach the moment in which life ends and we must find the Lord. Each of us is on the go…" Sadly it is too late to "find the Lord" at that point, but this is the reminder that Catholic dogma preaches a second chance gospel message, by rosaries, masses, vigils and pilgrimages to secure a soul's release from hell….. It was a portent of the things to come on the Pope's pilgrimage to Fatima.

11 May 2017. Pope Francis noted, Mary is spoken of as the "silent woman in the Gospels, who reflects on every word and situation she observes.

Mary offers an alternative female presence of calm and perseverance. Mary does not get depressed before the difficulty of life, nor does she protest violently against a hostile fate…."

Francis described a graying woman from Nazareth watching her son in the moment of need. "Mary is there, faithfully present, every time there is a candle to keep alight in a place of mist and fog," He said. Remember in John's Gospel, Chapter 19:25-30, John tells how he led the Lord's mother Mary away from the Cross to his home, and then he alone returns to witness the last events.

Mary is, "the Mother of Hope". "This is why we love her as a mother. Because she teaches us the virtue of patience, even when everything seems devoid of meaning. May Mary, the Mother that Jesus gifted to us all, guide our footsteps in moments of hardship."

12 May 2017. Francis greeted pilgrims, Vatican radio announced, "before the great vigil that would begin with the recitation of the Rosary led by the Holy Father himself." He referred to the pilgrimage as one of "hope and peace". "May she, the loving and solicitous Mother of the needy obtain for them the Lord's blessing." (Mary having the grace and power/position to get prayers answered for us, not just with us praying in the Lord's name as he told us!)

"On this Friday evening he noted that Mary fulfilled the blessing of Numbers 6:24-26, and noted, "No other creature every basked in the light of God's face as did Mary; she in turn gave a human face to the Son of the Eternal Father." Quoting Paul VI, he noted "with Christ and Mary we abide in God…… indeed if we want to be Christian we must be Marian; in a word, we have to acknowledge the essential, vital and providential relationship uniting Our Lady to Jesus, a relationship that opens before us to way leading to him."

"Each time we recite the Rosary, in this holy place or anywhere else, the Gospel enters anew into the life of individuals, families, peoples and the entire world." He then speaks totally true statements about the penalty for sin being taken by Jesus, but then after a discussion of justice and tenderness he goes on…. "this is what makes the ecclesial community look to Mary as a model of evangelization…..With Mary, may each of us become a sign and sacrament of the mercy of God, who pardons always and pardons everything."

He finished the message with the words, "hand in hand with the Virgin Mother, and under her watchful gaze, may we come to sing with joy the mercies of the Lord, and cry out, 'my soul sings to you Lord!' The mercy you have shown to all your saints and all your faithful people, you have also shown to me. Out of the pride of my heart, I went astray, following my own ambitions and interests, without gaining any crown of glory! My one hope of glory Lord is this, that your Mother will take me in her arms, shelter me beneath her mantle, and set me close to your heart. Amen."

At the chapel of the apparitions later at night Cardinal Parolin spoke, reminding the pilgrims, that in the apparitions, "Our Lady instructed the shepherd children to tell the world to convert and pray for peace."…… "What does Fatima ask of us? Perseverance in the consecration (of the world) to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, shown daily by the recitation of the Rosary. And what if, despite our prayers, wars continue? Even though immediate results may not be evident, let us persevere in prayer. Prayer is never useless. Sooner of later it will bear fruit."

How can Mary be the "Mother of Evangelism"? She does not appear as an active player in Acts, where the pattern for New Testament evangelism is set. In what way can saying the Rosary be seen as "evangelism"? In what way is prayer to her seen as evangelism? If people do these things, rather than share the gospel message with others, who is the winner? How dangerous are these pleasant and familiar things that Pope Francis and his team are saying?

13 May 2017. At the canonization Mass for Francisco and Jacinta the Pope spoke, saying that the "Virgin Mary introduced (them) into the immense ocean of God's light and taught (them) to adore him". From our study above, this is to ignore the actual words of the apparition and give them the best possible meaning!

"We have a Mother, so beautiful a Lady, as the seers of Fatima said to one another as they returned home on that blessed day of 13 May one hundred years ago." "Fatima is more than anything this mantle of light that protects us, here as in almost no other place on earth. We need but take refuge under the protection of the Virgin Mary and to ask her, as the Salve Regina (Queen of Salvation); show unto us…Jesus… Dear pilgrims we have a Mother…."

"When Jesus ascended to heaven he brought to the Heavenly Father our humanity, which he assumed in the womb of the Virgin Mary and will never forsake.

Like an anchor, let us fix our hope on that humanity, seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father. May this hope guide our lives! It is a hope that sustains us always, to our dying breath."

"Confirmed in this hope, we have gathered here to give thanks for the countless graces bestowed over these last 100 years. All of them passed beneath the mantle of light that Our Lady has spread over the four corners of the earth,….with Mary's protection may we be for our world sentinels of the dawn, contemplating the true face of Jesus the Saviour, resplendent at Easter. Thus may we rediscover the young and beautiful face of the church, which shines forth when she is missionary, welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means and rich in love…."

My Appeal

Reflect deeply upon the events at Fatima 100 years ago, and all other appearances of angels, and test them and their teachings by the Scriptures alone.

Deceptions will increase and false prophets will increase as we draw nearer the end of days, for we have the Lord's warning about this. Let us be discerning – and that means, let us be biblical.

Let us honour the real Mary who cheers us on from the stands of heaven Hebrews 12:1ff. Let us not be deceived, and let our voices not be silent if others are walking into eternal judgment through their acceptance of satanic deception.

We must be incredibly careful when we are encouraged by men or angels or demons to do things contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture. **Galatians 1:6-9**. It is grave error to fail to follow our Lord's instructions, or those of the Apostles regarding evangelism. **Jude 3**.

It is not Mary's help, nor the Apostles, also in heaven help that man needs, it is acceptance alone of the completed work of Jesus for their sins. It is Jesus help we need and that comes through his fellowship with us and the Holy Spirit's power within us. **Ephesians 5:18, Revelation 3:15-20**.

Mary applauds all work done by believers in the filling of the Holy Spirit, and she cheers us on with all the apostles, and with all who have died in faith, (**Hebrews 12:1-3**) but she is not special queen of heaven, nor the queen of our salvation – there is only the King of kings and the Lord of all lords– Jesus!

We are as members of his body the Church called the "Bride of Christ" (Revelation 21-22) – this has one clear meaning - the Church is the "queen of heaven", if such a term be rightly used. If the true "Bride" of Christ is the Church itself then all other claims are dangerous distractions at best, and dangerous false teaching at worst.

Reflect deeply upon the events at Fatima for they give us a glimpse of where the Roman Catholic Church may be heading and it is not a good place, it is a place where emotional ritual replaces truth, and where a potentially demonic apparition is accepted as the most wonderful woman who ever lived, and as a result the real Mary is dishonoured.

Please my dear brethren, let us stick to the Scriptures, and honour Mary as the greatest of all women, and let us uphold the Apostolic Faith, and thereby select the best company for time and eternity. The angels are either our servants or enemies – there isn't a third position for them – so lets get it right and be the good soldiers we are supposed to be!

Dr John C McEwan
MA(Hons), Dip Tchg, PhD, MNZAC, VRD.
Dean, EBCWA
Auckland, New Zealand

Revised
18 October 2019 My 55th Anniversary of Salvation